

LEONIDAS.

A

P O E M.



LEONIDAS.

P. O. E. M.

3 396  
LEONIDAS.

20  
A

P O E M.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

V O L. II. 129

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. CADELL, in the Strand; and  
RICHARDSON and URQUHART, at the Royal  
Exchange.

M.DCC.LXX.





# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the SEVENTH.

### The Argument.

*Megistias delivers Melissa's message to Leonidas. Medon, her brother, conducts him to the Temple. She furnishes Leonidas with the means of executing a design, he had premeditated to annoy the enemy. They are joined by a body of mariners under the command of Æschylus, a celebrated poet and warrior among the Athenians. Leonidas takes the necessary measures; and, observing from a summit of Oeta the motions of the Persian army, expects another attack: this is renewed with great violence by Hyperanthes, Abrocomes, and the principal Persian leaders at the head of some chosen troops.*

**M**egistias, urging to unwonted speed  
His aged steps, by Dithyrambus charg'd

VOL. II.

B

With

With sage Meliffa's words, had now rejoin'd  
The king of Lacedæmon. At his fide  
Was Maron posted, watchful to receive 5  
His high injunctions. In the rear they stood  
Behind two thousand Locrians, deep array'd  
By warlike Medon, from Oileus sprung.  
Leonidas to them his anxious mind  
Was thus disclosing. Medon, Maron, hear. 10  
From this low rampart my exploring eye  
But half commands the action, yet hath mark'd  
Enough for caution. Yon Barbarian camp,  
Immense, exhaustless, deluging the ground  
With myriads, still o'erflowing, may consume 15  
By endless numbers, and unceasing toil  
The Grecian strength. Not marble is our flesh,  
Nor adamant our sinews. Silvan pow'rs,  
Who dwell on Oeta, your superior aid  
We must solicit. Your stupendous cliffs 20  
In

In those loose rocks, and branchless trunks contain  
More fell annoyance, than the arm of man.

HE ended; when Megistias. Virtuous king,  
Melissa, priestess of the tuneful nine,  
By their behests invites thy honor'd feet 25  
To her chaste dwelling, seated on that hill.  
To conference of high import she calls  
Thee, first of Grecians. Medon interpos'd.

SHE is my sister. Justice rules her ways  
With piety and wisdom. To her voice 30  
The nations round give ear. The muses breathe  
Their inspiration through her spotless soul,  
Which borders on divinity. She calls  
On thee. O truly styl'd the first of Greeks,  
Regard her call. Yon cliff's projecting head 35  
To thy discernment will afford a scope



More full, more certain; thence thy skilful eye  
Will best direct the fight. Meliffa's fire  
Was ever present to the king in thought,  
Who thus to Medon. Lead, Oileus' son. 40  
Before the daughter of Oileus place  
My willing feet. They hasten to the cave,  
Megistias, Maron follow. Through the rock,  
Leonidas, ascending to the fane,  
Rose like the god of morning from the cell 45  
Of night, when, shedding cheerfulness and day  
On hill and vale emblaz'd with dewy gems,  
He gladdens nature. Lacedæmon's king,  
Majestically graceful and serene,  
Dispels the rigour in that solemn feat 50  
Of holy sequestration. On the face  
Of pensive-ey'd religion rapture glows  
In admiration of the god-like man.  
Advanc'd Meliffa. He her proffer'd hand

In

In hue, in purity like snow, receiv'd.

55

A heav'n-illumin'd dignity of look

On him she fix'd. Rever'd by all, she spake,

HAIL ! chief of men, selected by the gods

For purer fame, than Hercules acquir'd.

This hour allows no pause. She leads the king 60

With Medon, Maron, and Megistias down

A slope, declining to the mossy verge,

Which terminates the mountain. While they pass,

She thus proceeds. These marble masses view, 64

Which lie dispers'd around you. They were hewn

From yonder quarry. Note those pond'rous beams,

The silvan offspring of that hill. With these

At my request th' Amphictyons from their seat

Of gen'ral council piously decreed

To raise a dome, the ornament of Greece.

70

Observe those wither'd firs, those mould'ring oaks,

Down that declivity, half-rooted, bent,  
Inviting human force——Then look below.  
There lies Thermopylæ. I see, exclaims  
The high-conceiving hero. I recal 75  
Thy father's words and forecast. He presag'd,  
I should not find his daughter's counsel vain.  
He to accomplish, what thy wisdom plans,  
Hath amplest means supply'd. Go, Medon, bring  
The thousand peasants, from th' Oïlean vale 80  
Detach'd. Their leader Meliboeus bring.  
Fly, Maron. Ev'ry instrument provide  
To fell the trees, to drag the massy beams,  
To lift the broad-hewn fragments. Are not these  
For sacred use reserv'd, Megistias said? 85  
Can these be wielded by the hand of Mars  
Without pollution? In a solemn tone  
The priests answer'd. Rev'rend man, who bear'st  
Pontific wreaths, and thou, great captain, hear.

Forbear



Book VII.      LEONIDAS.

7

Forbear to think, that my unprompted mind,      90  
 Calm and sequester'd in religion's peace,  
 Could have devis'd a stratagem of war ;  
 Or, unpermitted, could resign to Mars  
 These rich materials, gather'd to restore  
 In strength and splendour yon decrepid walls,      95  
 And that time-shaken roof.    Rejecting sleep,  
 Last night I lay, contriving swift revenge  
 On these Barbarians, whose career profane  
 O'erturns the Grecian temples, and devotes  
 Their holy bow'rs to flames.    I left my couch,      100  
 Long ere the sun his orient gates unbarr'd.  
 Beneath yon beach my pensive head reclin'd.  
 The rivulets, the fountains, warbling round,  
 Attracted slumber.    In a dream I saw  
 Calliopé.    Her sisters, all with harps,      105  
 Were rang'd around her ; as their Parian forms

Shew in the temple. Dost thou sleep, she said ?  
Melissa, dost thou sleep ? The barb'rous host  
Approaches Greece. The first of Grecians comes  
By death to vanquish. Priestess, let him hurl 110  
These marble heaps, these consecrated beams,  
Our sane itself to crush the impious ranks.  
The hero summon to our sacred hill.  
Reveal the promis'd succour. All is due  
To liberty against a tyrant's pride. 115  
She struck her shell. In concert full reply'd  
The sister lyres. Leonidas they sung  
In ev'ry note and dialect yet known,  
In measures new, in language yet to come.

SHE finish'd. Then Megistias. Dear to heav'n,  
By nation's honor'd, and in tow'ring thought 121  
O'er either sex pre-eminent, thy words  
To me a soldier and a priest suffice.

I hesitate

I hesitate no longer. But the king,  
Wrapt in ecstatic contemplation stood, 125  
Revolving deep an answer, which might suit  
His dignity and hers. At length he spake.

Not Lacedæmon's whole collected state  
Of senate, people, ephori and kings,  
Not the Amphictyons, whose convention holds 130  
The universal majesty of Greece,  
E'er drew such rev'rence, as thy single form,  
O all-surpassing woman, worthy child  
Of time-renown'd Oileus. In thy voice  
I hear the goddess, Liberty. I see 135  
In thy sublimity of look and port  
That daughter bright of Eleutherian Jove:  
Me thou hast prais'd. My conscious spirit feels,  
That not to triumph in thy virtuous praise  
Were want of virtue. Yet, illustrious dame, 140



Were I assur'd, that oracles delude ;  
That, unavailing, I should spill my blood ;  
That all the Muses of subjected Greece  
Hereafter would be silent, and my name  
Be ne'er transmitted to recording time ; 145  
There is in virtue for her sake alone,  
What should uphold my resolution firm.  
My country's laws I never would survive.

MOV'D at his words, reflecting on his fate,  
She had relax'd her dignity of mind, 150  
Had sunk in sadness ; but her brother's helm  
Before her beams. Relumining her night,  
He through the cave like Hesperus ascends,  
Th' Oilean hinds conducting to achieve  
The enterprize, she counsels. Now her ear 155  
Is pierc'd by notes, shrill founding from the vault.  
Upstarts a diff'rent band, alert and light,

Athenian

Athenian sailors. Long and sep'rate files.  
 Of lusty shoulders, eas'd by union, bear  
 Thick, well-compacted cables, wont to heave 160  
 The restiff anchor. To a naval pipe,  
 As if one soul invigorated all,  
 And all compos'd one body, they had trod  
 In equal paces, mazy, yet unbroke  
 Throughout their passage. So the spinal strength  
 Of some portentous serpent, whom the heats 166  
 Of Libya breed, indissolubly knit,  
 But flexible, a-cross the sandy plain,  
 Or up the mountain draws his spotted length.  
 Or where a winding excavation leads 170  
 Through rocks abrupt and wild, Of stature large,  
 In arms, which shew'd simplicity of strength,  
 No decoration of redundant art,  
 With sable horse-hair, floating down his back,  
 A warrior moves behind. Compos'd in gait, 175

Austerly

Austerely grave and thoughtful, on his shield  
The democratic majesty he bore  
Of Athens. Carv'd in emblematic brass,  
Her image stood with Pallas by her side,  
And trampled under each victorious foot 1180  
A regal crown, one Persian, one usurpt  
By her own tyrants, on the well-fought plain  
Of Marathon confounded. He commands  
These future guardians of their country's weal,  
Of gen'ral Greece the bulwarks. Their high deeds  
From Artemisium, from th' empurpled shores 186  
Of Salamis renown shall echo wide;  
Shall tell posterity in latest times,  
That naval fortitude controls the world.  
Swift Maron, following, brings a vig'rous band 190  
Of Helots. Ev'ry instrument they wield  
To delve, to hew, to heave; and active last  
Bounds Meliboeus, vigilant to urge

The



Book VII. LEONIDAS. 13

The tardy forward. To Laconia's king  
Advanc'd th' Athenian leader, and began. 195

THOU godlike ruler of Eurotas, hail!  
Thee by my voice Themistocles salutes,  
The admiral of Athens. I conduct  
By public choice the squadron of my tribe,  
And Æschylus am call'd. Our chief hath giv'n 200  
Three days to glory on Eubœa's coast,  
Whose promontories almost rise to meet  
Thy ken from Oeta's cliffs. This morning saw  
The worsted foe, from Artemisium driv'n,  
Leave their disabled ships, and floating wrecks 205  
For Greeian trophies. When the fight was clos'd,  
I was detach'd to bring th' auspicious news,  
To bid thee welcome. Fortunate my keel  
Hath swiftly borne me. Joyful I concur  
In thy attempt. Appris'd by yonder chiefs, 210

I

Who

Who met me landing, instant from the ships  
A thousand gallant mariners I drew,  
Who till the setting sun shall lend their toil.

THEMISTOCLES and thou accept my heart,  
Leonidas reply'd, and closely strain'd 215  
The brave, the learn'd Athenian to his breast.  
To envy is ignoble, to admire  
Th' activity of Athens will become  
A king of Sparta, who like thee condemn'd  
His country's sloth. But Sparta now is arm'd. 220  
Thou shalt commend. Behold me station'd here  
To watch the wild vicissitudes of war.  
Direct the course of slaughter. To this post  
By that superior woman I was call'd.  
By long protracted fight left fainting Greece 225  
Should yield, outnumber'd, my enlighten'd soul  
Through her, whom heav'n enlightens, hath devis'd  
To

To whelm the num'rous, persevering foes  
In hideous death, and signalize the day  
With horrors new to war. The Muses prompt 230  
The bright achievement. Lo ! from Athens smiles  
Minerva too. Her swift, auspicious aid.  
In thee we find, and these, an ancient race,  
By her and Neptune cherish'd. Straight he meets  
The gallant train, majestic with his arms 235  
Outstretch'd, in this applauding strain he spake.

O LIB'RAL people, earliest arm'd to shield  
Not your own Athens more, than gen'ral Greece,  
You best deserve her gratitude. Her praise  
Will rank you foremost on the rolls of fame. 240

THEY hear, they gaze, revering and rever'd.  
Fresh numbers muster, rushing from the hills,  
The thickets round. Melissa, pointing, spake.



I AM their leader. Natives of the hills  
Are these, the rural worshippers of Pan, 245  
Who breathes an ardour through their humble  
minds  
To join you warriors. Vassals these, not mine,  
But of the Muses, and their hallow'd laws,  
Administer'd by me. Their patient hands  
Make culture smile, where nature seems to chide;  
Nor wanting my instructions, or my pray'rs, 251  
Fertility they scatter by their toil  
Around this aged temple's wild domain.  
Is Melibœus here ! Thou fence secure  
To old Oïleus from the cares of time, 255  
Thrice art thou welcome. Useful, wise, belov'd,  
Where'er thou sojournest, on Oeta known,  
As oft the bounty of a father's love  
Thou on Melissa's solitude dost pour,  
Be thou director of these mountain hinds, 260

TH' important labour to inspiring airs  
From flutes and harps in symphony with hymns  
Of holy virgins, ardent all perform,  
In bands divided under diff'rent chiefs.  
Huge timbers, blocks of marble to remove 265  
They first attempted ; then assembled stones  
Loose in their beds, and wither'd trunks, upturn  
By tempests ; next dismember'd from the rock  
Broad, rugged fragments ; from the mountains hew'd  
Their venerable firs, and aged oaks, 270  
Which, of their branches by the light'ning bar'd,  
Presented still against the blasting flame  
Their hoary pride unshaken. These the Greeks,  
But chief th' Athenian mariners, to force  
Uniting skill, with maffy leavers heave, 275  
With strong-knit cables drag : till, now dispos'd,  
Where great Leonidas appoints, the piles  
Nod o'er the Streights. This new and sudden scene  
Might

Might lift imagination to belief,  
That Orpheus and Amphion from their beds 280  
Of ever blooming asphodel had heard  
The Muses call ; had brought their fabled harps,  
At whose mellifluent charm once more the trees  
Had burst their fibrous bands, and marbles leap'd  
In rapid motion from the quarry's womb, 285  
That day to follow harmony in aid  
Of gen'rous valour. Fancy might discern  
Cerulean Tethys, from her coral grot  
Emerging, seated on her pearly car,  
With Nereids, floating on the surge below, 290  
To view in wonder from the Malian bay  
The Attic sons of Neptune ; who forsook  
Their wooden walls to range th' Oetœan crags,  
To rend the forests, and disjoin the rocks.

MEAN



MEANTIME a hundred sheep are slain. Their

limbs

295

From burning piles fume grateful. Bounty spreads

A decent board. Simplicity attends.

Then spake the priestess. Long-enduring chiefs,

Your efforts, now accomplish'd, may admit

Refection due to this hard-labour'd train,

300

Due to yourselves. Her hospitable smile

Wins her well-chosen guests, Laconia's king,

Her brother, Maron, Æschylus divine

With Acarnania's priest. Her first commands

To Melibœus sedulous and blithe

305

Distribute plenty through the toiling croud.

Then, skreen'd beneath close umbrage of an oak,

Each care-divested chief the banquet shares.

COOL breezes, whisp'ring, flutter in the leaves,

Whose verdure, pendent in an arch, repel

310

The

The west'ring sun's hot glare. Favonius bland  
His breath impregnates with exhaling sweets  
From flow'ry beds, whose scented clusters deck  
The gleaming pool in view. Fast by, a brook  
In limpid lapses over native steps 315  
Attunes his cadence to sonorous strings,  
And liquid accents of Melissa's maids.  
The floating air in melody respire.  
A rapture mingles in the calm repast.  
Uprises Æschylus. A goblet full 320  
He grasps. To those divinities, who dwell  
In yonder temple, this libation first,  
To thee, benignant hostess, next I pour,  
Then to thy fame, Leonidas. He said.  
His breast, with growing heat distended, prompts 325  
His eager hand, to whose expressive sign  
One of the virgins cedes her sacred lyre.  
Their choral song complacency restrains.

The

The soul of music, bursting from his touch,  
At once gives birth to sentiment sublime. 330

HERCULES, and Perseus, he began,  
Star-spangled twins of Leda, and the rest  
Of Jove's immediate seed, your splendid acts  
Mankind protected, while the race was rude ;  
While o'er the earth's unciviliz'd extent 335

The savage monster, and the ruffian sway'd,  
More savage still. No policy, nor laws  
Had fram'd societies. By single strength  
A single ruffian, or a monster fell.

The legislator rose. Three lights in Greece, 340  
Lycurgus, Solon and Zaleucus blaz'd.

Then, substituting wisdom, Jove profuse  
Of his own blood no longer, gave us more  
In discipline and manners, which can form  
A hero like Leonidas, than all 345

The



The god-begotten progeny before.  
The pupils next of Solon claim the muse.  
Sound your hoarse conchs, ye Tritons. You beheld  
The Atlantean shape of slaughter wade  
Through your astonish'd deeps, his purple arm 350  
Uplifting high before th' Athenian line.  
You saw bright conquest, riding on the gale,  
Which swell'd their sails ; saw terror at their helms  
To guide their brazen beaks on Asia's pride.  
Her adamantin grapple from their decks 355  
Fate threw, and ruin on the hostile fleet  
Inextricably fasten'd. Sound, ye nymphs  
Of Oeta's mountains, of her woods and streams,  
Who hourly witness to Melissa's worth,  
Ye Oreads, Dryads, Naiads, sound her praise. 360  
Proclaim Zaleucus by his daughter grac'd  
Like Solon and Lycurgus by their sons.

LACO-

LACONIA's hero, and the priests bow'd  
Their foreheads grateful to the bard sublime.  
She, rising, takes the word. More sweet thy lyre 365  
To friendship's ear, than terrible to foes  
Thy spear in battle, though the keenest point,  
Which ever pierc'd Barbarians. Close we here  
The song and banquet. Hark! a distant din  
From Asia's camp requires immediate care. 370

SHE leads. Along the rocky verge they pass.  
In calm delight Leonidas surveys  
All in the order, which he last assign'd ;  
As o'er Thermopylæ beneath he cast  
A wary look. The mountain's furthest crag 375  
Now reach'd, Melissa to the king began.

OBSERVE that space below, dispers'd in dales,  
In hollows, winding through dissever'd rocks.

The

The slender outlet, skreen'd by yonder shrubs,  
Leads to the pass. There stately to my view 380  
The martial queen of Caria yester fun,  
Descending, shew'd. Her loudly I reprov'd.  
But she, devoted to the Persian king,  
In ambush there preserv'd his flying host.  
She last retreated ; but, retreating, prov'd 385  
Her valour equal to a better cause.  
Again I see the heroine approach.

MEGISTIAS then. I see a powerful arm,  
Sustaining firm the large, emblazon'd shield,  
Which, fashion'd first in Caria, we have learn'd 390  
To imitate in Greece. Sublime her port  
Bespeaks a mighty spirit. Priestess, look.  
An act of piety she now performs,  
Directing those, perhaps her Carian band,  
To bear dead brethren from the bloody field. 395

Among



Among the horsemen an exalted form  
Like Demaratus strikes my searching eye.  
To me, recalling his transcendent rank  
In Sparta once, he seems a languid sun,  
Which dimly sinks in exhalations dark, 400  
Enveloping his radiance. While he spake,  
Intent on martial duty Medon views  
The dang'rous thicket ; Lacedæmon's chief,  
Around the region his confid'rate eye  
Extending, marks each movement of the foe. 405

TH' imperial Persian from his lofty car  
Had in the morning's early conflict seen  
His vanquish'd army, pouring from the streights  
Back to their tents, and o'er his camp dispers'd  
In consternation ; as a river bursts 410  
Impetuous from his fountain, then, enlarg'd,  
Spreads a dead surface o'er some level marsh.

Th' astonish'd king thrice started from his feat;  
Shame, fear and indignation rent his breast;  
As ruin irresistible were near 415  
To overwhelm his millions. Haste, he call'd  
To Hyperanthes, haste and meet the Greeks.  
Their daring rage, their insolence repel.  
From such dishonor vindicate our name.

His royal brother through th' extensive camp 420  
Obedient mov'd. Deliberate and brave,  
Each active prince from ev'ry tent remote,  
The hardiest troops he summon'd. Caria's queen,  
To Hyperanthes bound by firm esteem  
Of worth, unrivall'd in the Persian court, 425  
In solemn pace was now returning slow  
Before a band, transporting from the field  
Their slain companions to the sandy beach.

SHE stopp'd, and thus address'd him. Learn, O  
prince,

From one, whose wishes on thy merit wait,  
The only means to bind thy gallant brow 431

In fairest wreaths. To break the Grecian line

In vain ye struggle, unarray'd and lax,

Depriv'd of union. Try to form one band

In order'd ranks, and emulate the foe. 435

Nor to secure a thicket next the pass

Forget. Selected numbers station there.

Farewel, young hero. May thy fortune prove

Unlike to mine. Had Asia's millions spar'd

One myriad to sustain me, none had seen 440

Me quit the dang'rous contest. But the head

Of base Argestes on some future day

Shall feel my treasur'd vengeance. From the fleet

I only stay, till burial rites are paid

To these dead Carians. On this fatal strand 445



May Artemisia's grief appease your ghosts,  
My faithful subjects, sacrific'd in vain.

THE hero grateful and respectful heard,  
What soon his warmth neglected at the sight  
Of spears, which flam'd innumerable round. 450  
Beyond the rest in lustre was a band,  
The Satellites of Xerxes. They forsook  
Their constant orbit round th' imperial throne  
At this dread crisis. To a myriad fix'd,  
From their unchanging number they deriv'd 455  
The title of immortals. Light their spears;  
Set in pomegranates of refulgent gold,  
Or burnish'd silver, were the slender blades.  
Magnificent and stately were the ranks.  
The prince, commanding mute attention, spake. 460

IN two divisions part your number, chiefs.  
One will I lead to onset. In my ranks

Abro-

Abrocomes, Hydarnes shall advance,  
Pandates, Mindus, Intaphernes brave  
To wrest this short-liv'd victory from Greece. 465  
Thou, Abradates, by Sofarnes join'd,  
Orontes and Mazæus, keep the rest  
From action. Future succour they must lend,  
Should envious fate exhaust our num'rous files.  
For, O pure Mithra, may thy radiant eye 470  
Ne'er see us, yielding to ignoble flight,  
The Persian name dishonor. May the acts  
Of our renown'd progenitors, who, led  
By Cyrus, gave one monarch to the east,  
Inus revive. O think, ye Persian lords, 475  
What endless infamy will blast your names ;  
Should Greece, that narrow portion of the earth,  
Your pow'r defy : when Babylon hath low'rd  
Her towring crest, when Lydia's pride is quell'd  
In Croesus vanquish'd, when her empire lost 480

Ecbatana deplores. Ye chosen guard,  
Your king's immortal bulwark, O reflect,  
What deeds from your superior swords he claims.  
You share his largest bounty. To your faith,  
Your constancy and prowess he commits 485  
His throne, his person, and this day his fame.

THEY wave their banners, blazing in the sun,  
Who then three hours tow'r'd Hesperus had driv'n  
From his meridian height. Amid their shouts  
The hoarse-responding billows are not heard. 490  
Of diff'rent nations, and in diff'rent garb,  
Innumerable and vary'd like the shells,  
By restless Tethys scatter'd on the beach,  
O'er which they trod, the multitude advanc'd,  
Straight by Leonidas descry'd. The van 495  
Abrocomes and Hyperanthes led,

Pindates,



Pandates, Mindus. Violent their march  
Sweeps down the rocky, hollow-sounding pass.  
So, where th' unequal globe in mountains swells,  
A torrent rolls his thund'ring surge between 500  
The steep-erected cliffs ; tumultuous dash  
The waters, bursting on the pointed crags :  
The valley roars ; the marble channel foams.  
Th' undaunted Greeks immoveably withstand  
The dire encounter. Soon th' impetuous shock 505  
Of thousands and of myriads shakes the ground.  
Stupendous scene of terror ! Under hills,  
Whose sides, half-arching, o'er the hosts project,  
The unabating fortitude of Greece  
Maintains her line, th' untrain'd Barbarians charge  
In savage fury. With inverted trunks, 511  
Or bent obliquely from the shagged ridge,  
The silvan horrors overshade the fight.

The clanging trump, the crash of mingled spears,  
The groan of death, and war's discordant shouts 515  
Alarm the echoes in their neighb'ring caves;  
Woods, cliffs and shores return the dreadful sound.

*The END of the Seventh Book.*



# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the EIGHTH.

### The Argument.

*Hyperanthes, discontinuing the fight, while he waits for re-enforcements, Teribazus, a Persian remarkable for his merit and learning, and highly beloved by Hyperanthes, but unhappy in his passion for Ariana, a daughter of Darius, advances from the rest of the army to the rescue of a friend in distress, who lay wounded on the field of battle. Teribazus is attacked by Diophantus, the Mantinean, whom he overcomes; then engaging with Dithyrambus, is himself slain. Hyperanthes hastens to his succour. A general battle ensues, where Diomedon distinguishes his valour. Hyperanthes and Abrocomes, partly by their own efforts, and partly by the perfidy of the Thebans, who desert the line, being on the point of forcing the Grecians, are repulsed by the Lacedæmonians. Hyperanthes composes a select body out of the Persian standing forces, and, making an improvement in their discipline, renews the attack; upon which Leonidas changes the disposition of his*



*army : Hyperanthes and the ablest Persian generals are driven out of the field, and several thousands of the Barbarians, circumvented in the pass, are entirely destroyed.*

**A**MID the van of Persia was a youth,  
 Nam'd Teribazus, not for golden stores,  
 Not for wide pastures, travers'd o'er by herds,  
 By fleece-abounding sheep, or gen'rous flocks,  
 Nor yet for pow'r, nor splendid honors fam'd. 5  
 Rich was his mind in ev'ry art divine ;  
 Through ev'ry path of science had he walk'd,  
 The votary of wisdom. In the years,  
 When tender down invests the ruddy cheek,  
 He with the Magi turn'd the hallow'd page 10  
 Of Zoroastres. Then his tow'ring thoughts  
 High on the plumes of contemplation soar'd,  
 He from the lofty Babylonian fane  
 With learn'd Chaldeans trac'd the heav'nly sphere,  
 There number'd o'er the vivid fires, which gleam 15

On

On night's bespangled bosom. Nor unheard  
Were Indian fages from sequester'd bow'rs,  
While on the banks of Ganges they disclos'd  
The pow'rs of nature, whether in the woods,  
The fruitful glebe, or flow'r, the healing plant, 20  
The limpid waters, or the ambient air,  
Or in the purer element of fire,  
The realm of old Sesostris next he view'd,  
Mysterious Ægypt with her hidden rites  
Of Isis and Osiris. Last he fought 25  
Th' Ionian Greeks, from Athens sprung, nor pass'd  
Miletus by, which once in rapture heard  
The tongue of Thales, nor Priene's walls,  
Where wisdom dwelt with Bias, nor the seat  
Of Pittacus, rever'd on Lesbian shores. 30

Th' enlighten'd youth to Susa now return'd,  
Place of his birth. His merit soon was dear.

To.

To Hyperanthes. It was now the time,  
That discontent and murmur on the banks  
Of Nile were loud and threat'ning. Chembes there  
The only faithful stood, a potent lord, 36  
Whom Xerxes held by promis'd nuptial ties  
With his own blood. To this Ægyptian prince  
Bright Ariana was the destin'd spouse,  
From the same bed with Hyperanthes born. 40  
Among her guards was Teribazus nam'd  
By that fond brother, tender of her weal.

TH' Ægyptian boundaries they gain. They hear  
Of insurrection, of the Pharian tribes  
In arms, and Chembes in the tumult slain. 45  
They pitch their tents, at midnight are assail'd,  
Surpris'd, their leaders massacred, the slaves  
Of Ariana captives borne away,  
Her own pavilion forc'd, her person seiz'd



By ruffian hands: when timely to redeem 50

Her and th' invaded camp from further spoil

Flies Teribazus with a rally'd band,

Swift on her chariot seats the royal fair,

Nor waits the dawn. Of all her menial train

None, but three female slaves are left. Her guide,

Her comforter and guardian fate provides 56

In him, distinguish'd by his worth alone,

No prince, nor satrap, now the single chief

Of her surviving guard. Of regal birth,

But with excelling graces in her soul, 60

Unlike an eastern princess she inclines

To his consoling, his instructive tongue

An humbled ear. Amid the converse sweet

Her charms, her mind, her virtues he explores,

Admiring. Soon is admiration chang'd 65

To love; nor loves he sooner, than despairs.

From morn till ev'n her passing wheels he guards

Back

Back to Euphrates. Often, as she mounts,  
Or quits the car, his arm her weight sustains  
With trembling pleasure. His assiduous hand 70  
From purest fountains wafts the living flood,  
Nor seldom by the fair-one's soft command  
Would he repose him, at her feet reclin'd ;  
While o'er his lips her lovely forehead bow'd,  
Won by his grateful eloquence, which sooth'd 75  
With sweet variety the tedious march,  
Beguiling time. He too would then forget  
His pains awhile, in raptures vain entranc'd,  
Delusion all, and fleeting rays of joy,  
Soon overcast by more intense despair ; 80  
Like wintry clouds, which, op'ning for a time,  
Tinge their black folds with gleams of scatter'd light,  
Then, swiftly closing, on the brow of morn  
Condense their horrors, and in thickest gloom  
The ruddy beauty veil. They now approach 85

The

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 39

The tow'r of Belus. Hyperanthes leads  
Through Babylon an army to chastise  
The crime of Ægypt. Teribazus here  
Parts from his princess, marches bright in steel  
Beneath his patron's banner, gathers palms 90  
On conquer'd Nile. To Susa he returns,  
To Ariana's residence, and bears  
Deep in his heart th' immedicable wound.  
But unreveal'd and silent was his pain ;  
Nor yet in solitary shades he roam'd, 95  
Nor shun'd resort : but o'er his sorrows cast  
A sickly dawn of gladness, and in smiles  
Conceal'd his anguish ; while the secret flame  
Rag'd in his bosom, and its peace consum'd : 99  
His soul still brooding o'er these mournful thoughts.

CAN I, O Wisdom, find relief in thee,  
Who dost approve my passion ? From the snares

Of



Of beauty only thou wouldst guard my heart.

But here thyself art charm'd ; where softness, grace,

And ev'ry virtue dignify desire. 100

Yet thus to love, despairing to possess,

Of all the torments, by relentless fate

On life inflicted, is the most severe.

Do I not feel thy warnings in my breast,

That flight alone can save me ? I will go 105

Back to the learn'd Chaldæans, on the banks

Of Ganges seek the fages ; where to heav'n

With thee my elevated soul shall tow'r.

O wretched Teribazus ! all conspires

Against thy peace. Our mighty lord prepares 110

To overwhelm the Grecians. Ev'ry youth

Is call'd to war ; and I, who lately pois'd

With no inglorious arm the soldier's lance,

Who near the side of Hyperanthes fought,

Must join the throng. How therefore can I fly 120

From

From Ariana, who with Asia's queens  
The splendid camp of Xerxes must adorn?  
Then be it so. Again I will adore  
Her gentle virtues. Her delightful voice,  
Her gracious sweetness shall again diffuse 125  
Resistless magic through my ravish'd heart;  
Till passion, thus with double rage enflam'd,  
Swells to distraction in my tortur'd breast,  
Then—but in vain through darkness do I search  
My fate—Despair and fortune be my guides. 130

THE day arriv'd, when Xerxes first advanc'd  
His arms from Susa's gates. The Persian dames,  
So were accustom'd all the eastern fair,  
In sumptuous cars accompany'd his march,  
A beauteous train, by Ariana grac'd. 135  
Her Teribazus follows, on her wheels  
Attends and pines. Such woes oppress the youth,  
Oppress

Oppress, but not enervate. From the van  
 He in this second conflict had withstood  
 The threat'ning frown of adamantinè Mars, 140  
 He singly, while his bravest friends recoil'd.  
 His manly temples no tiara bound.  
 The slender lance of Asia he disdain'd,  
 And her light target. Eminent he tow'r'd  
 In Grecian arms the wonder of his foes; 145  
 Among th' Ionians were his strenuous limbs  
 Train'd in the gymnïc school. A fulgent casque  
 Inclos'd his head. Before his face and chest  
 Down to the knees an ample shield was spread.  
 A pond'rous spear he shook. The well-aim'd  
 point 150  
 Sent two Phliasiàns to the realms of death  
 With four Tegæans, whose indignant chief,  
 Brave Hegesànder, vengeance breath'd in vain,

With



With streaming wounds repuls'd. Thus far un-  
match'd,

His arm prevail'd; when Hyperanthes call'd 155

From fight his fainting legions. Now each band

Their languid courage reenforc'd by rest.

Mean time with Teribazus thus conferr'd

Th' applauding prince. Thou much deserving  
youth,

Had twenty warriors in the dang'rous van 160

Like thee maintain'd the onset, Greece had wept

Her prostrate ranks. The weary'd fight awhile

I now relax, till Abradates strong,

Orontes and Mazæus are advanc'd.

Then to the conflict will I give no pause. 165

If not by prowess, yet by endless toil

Successive numbers shall exhaust the foe.

He said. Immers'd in sadness, scarce reply'd,

But to himself complain'd the am'rous youth. 169

STILL

STILL do I languish, mourning o'er the fame,  
My arm acquires. Tormented heart ! thou feat  
Of constant sorrow, what deceitful smiles  
Yet canst thou borrow from unreal hope  
To flatter life ? at Ariana's feet  
What if with supplicating knees I bow, 175  
Implore her pity, and reveal my love.  
Wretch ! canst thou climb to yon effulgent orb,  
And share the splendours, which irradiate heav'n ?  
Dost thou aspire to that exalted maid,  
Great Xerxes' sister, rivalling the claim 180  
Of Asia's proudest potentates and kings ?  
Unless within her bosom I inspir'd  
A passion fervent, as my own, nay more,  
Such, as dispelling ev'ry virgin fear,  
Might, unrestrain'd, disclose its fond desire, 185  
My love is hopeless ; and her willing hand,  
Should she bestow it, draws from Asia's lord

On

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 45.

On both perdition. By despair benumb'd,  
 His limbs their action lose. A wish for death  
 O'ercasts and chills his soul. When sudden cries  
 From Ariamnes rouse his drooping pow'rs. 191  
 Alike in manners they of equal age  
 Were friends, and partners in the glorious toil  
 Of war. Together they victorious chac'd  
 The bleeding sons of Nile, when Ægypt's pride 200  
 Before the sword of Hyperanthes fell.  
 That lov'd companion Teribazus views  
 By all abandon'd, in his gore outstretch'd  
 The victor's spoil. His languid spirit starts ;  
 He rushes ardent from the Persian line ; 205  
 The wounded warrior in his strong embrace  
 He bears away. By indignation stung,  
 Fierce from the Grecians Diophantus sends  
 A loud defiance. Teribazus leaves  
 His rescu'd friend. His massy shield he rears ; 210

High-



High brandishing his formidable spear,  
 He turns intrepid on th' approaching foe.  
 Amazement follows. On he strides, and shakes  
 The plumed honors of his shining crest.

Th' ill-fated Greek awaits th' unequal fight, 215  
 Pierc'd in the throat, with sounding arms he falls.

Through ev'ry file the Mantineans mourn,  
 Long on the slain the victor fix'd his sight

With these reflections. By thy splendid arms  
 Thou art a Greek of no ignoble rank. 220

From thy ill fortune I perhaps derive

A more conspicuous lustre—What if heav'n

Should add new victims, such as thou, to grace

My undeserving hand? Who knows, but she

Might smile upon my trophies. Oh! vain

thought! 225

I see the pride of Asia's monarch swell

With vengeance fatal to her beauteous head.

Disperse, ye phantom hopes. Too long, torn  
heart,

Hast thou with grief contended, Lo! I plant

My foot this moment on the verge of death, 230

By fame invited, by despair impell'd

To pass th' irremeable bound. No more

Shall Teribazus backward turn his step,

But here conclude his doom. Then cease to heave,

Thou troubled bosom, ev'ry thought be calm 235

Now at th' approach of everlasting peace.

He ended ; when a mighty foe drew nigh,  
Not less, than Dithyrambus. Ere they join'd,  
The Persian warrior to the Greek began.

ART thou th' unconquerable chief, who now'd  
Our battle down? That eagle on thy shield 241

Too well proclaims thee. To attempt thy force

I rashly

I rashly purpos'd. That my single arm  
Thou deign'st to meet, accept my thanks, and know,  
The thought of conquest less employs my soul, 245  
Than admiration of thy glorious deeds,  
And that by thee I cannot fall disgrac'd.

HE ceas'd. These words the Thespian youth  
return'd.

Of all the praises from thy gen'rous mouth 250  
The only portion, my desert may claim,  
Is this my bold adventure to confront  
Thee, yet unmatch'd. What Grecian hath not  
mark'd

Thy flaming steel? From Asia's boundless camp  
Not one hath equall'd thy victorious might. 255  
But whence thy armour of the Grecian form?  
Whence thy tall spear, thy helmet? Whence the  
weight

Of



Of that strong shield ! Unlike thy eastern friends,  
O if thou be'st some fugitive, who, lost  
To liberty and virtue, art become 260  
A tyrant's vile stipendiary, that arm,  
That valour thus triumphant I deplore,  
Which after all their efforts and success  
Deserve no honor from the gods, or men.

HERE Teribazus in a sigh rejoin'd.

I am to Greece a stranger, am a wretch  
To thee unknown, who courts this hour to die,  
Yet not ignobly, but in death to raise  
My name from darkness, while I end my woes,

THE Grecian then. I view thee, and I mourn.

A dignity, which virtue only bears, 271  
Firm resolution, seated on thy brow,

VOL. II.

D

Though

Though grief hath dimm'd thy drooping eye,  
demand

My veneration : and, whatever be  
The malice of thy fortune, what the cares, 275  
Infesting thus thy quiet, they create  
Within my breast the pity of a friend.  
Why then, constraining my reluctant hand  
To act against thee, will thy might support  
Thy unjust ambition of malignant kings, 280  
Thy goes to virtue, liberty and peace?  
Yet free from rage, or enmity I lift  
My adverse weapon. Victory I ask.  
Thy life may fate for happier days reserve.

THIS said, their beaming lances they protend,  
Of hostile hate, or fury both devoid, 286  
As on the Isthmian, or Olympic sands  
For fame alone contending. Either host,

Pois'd

Book VIII.      L E O N I D A S.      51

Pois'd on their arms, in silent wonder gaze.  
The fight commences. Soon the Grecian spear,  
Which, all the day in constant battle worn,      291  
Unnumber'd shields and corselets had transfix'd,  
Against the Persian buckler, shiv'ring, breaks,  
Its master's hand disarming. Then began  
The sense of honor, and the-dread of shame      295  
To swell in Dithyrambus. Undismay'd,  
He grappled with his foe, and instant seiz'd  
His threat'ning spear, before th' uplifted arm  
Could execute the meditated wound.      299  
The weapon burst between their struggling grasp.  
Their hold they loosen, bare their shining swords.  
With equal swiftness to defend, or charge  
Each active youth advances and recedes.  
On ev'ry side they traverse. Now direct,  
Obliquely now the wheeling blades descend.      305  
Still is the conflict dubious ; when the Greek,



Dissembling, points his falchion to the ground,  
His arm depressing, as o'ercome by toil :  
While with his buckler cautious he repels  
The blows, repeated by his active foe. 310  
Greece trembles for her hero. Joy pervades  
The ranks of Asia ; Hyperanthes strides  
Before the line, preparing to receive  
His friend triumphant : while the wary Greek  
Calm and defensive bears th' assault. At last, 315  
As by th' incautious fury of his strokes,  
The Persian swung his cov'ring shield aside,  
The fatal moment Dithyrambus seiz'd.  
Lightdarting forward with his feet outstretch'd,  
Between th' unguarded ribs he plung'd his steel. 320  
Affection, grief and terror wing the speed  
Of Hyperanthes. From his bleeding foe  
The Greek retires, not distant, and awaits  
The Persian prince. But he with watry cheeks

In

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 53

In speechless anguish clasps his dying friend ; 325

From whose cold lip with interrupted phrase

These accents break. O dearest, best of men !

Ten thousand thoughts of gratitude and love

Are struggling in my heart—O'erpow'ring fate

Denies my voice the utterance—O my friend ! 330

O Hyperanthes ! Hear my tongue unfold

What, had I liv'd, thou never shouldst have known.

I lov'd thy sister. With despair I lov'd.

Soliciting this honorable doom,

Without regret in Persia's fight and thine 335

I fall. Th' inexorable hand of fate

Weights down his eye-lids, and the gloom of death

His fleeting light eternally o'er shades.

Him on Choaspes o'er the blooming verge

A frantic mother shall bewail ; shall strew 340

Her silver tresses in the crystal wave :

While all the shores re-echo to the name

Of Teribazus lost. Th' afflicted prince,  
Contemplating in tears the pallid corse,  
Vents in these words the bitterness of grief. 345

OH ! Teribazus ! Oh ! my friend, whose loss  
I will deplore for ever. Oh ! what pow'r,  
By me, by thee offended, clos'd thy breast  
To Hyperanthes in distrust unkind !  
She should, she must have lov'd thee—Now no more  
Thy placid virtues, thy instructive tongue 351  
Shall drop their sweetness on my secret hours.  
But in complaints doth friendship waste the time,  
Which to immediate vengeance should be giv'n ?

HE ended, rushing furious on the Greek ; 355  
Who, while his gallant enemy expir'd,  
While Hyperanthes tenderly receiv'd  
The last embraces of his gasping friend,  
Stood



Stood nigh, reclin'd in sadness on his shield,  
 And in the pride of victory repin'd.      360  
 Unmark'd, his foe approach'd. But forward sprung  
 Diomedon. Before the Thespian youth  
 Aloft he rais'd his targe, and loudly thus.

HOLD thee, Barbarian, from a life more worth,  
 Than thou and Xerxes with his host of slaves.      365

HIS words he seconds with his rapid lance.  
 Soon a tremendous conflict had ensu'd ;  
 But Intaphernes, Mindus, and a croud  
 Of Persian lords, advancing, fill the space  
 Betwixt th' encount'ring chiefs. In mutual wrath,  
 With fruitless efforts they attempt the fight.      371  
 So rage two bulls along th' opposing banks  
 Of some deep flood, which parts the fruitful mead.  
 Defiance thunders from their angry mouths

In vain : in vain the furrow'd sod they rend ; 375

Wide rolls the stream, and intercepts the war.

As by malignant fortune if a drop  
Of moisture mingles with a burning mass  
Of liquid metal, instant show'rs of death 380  
On ev'ry side th' exploding fluid spreads ;  
So disappointment irritates the flame  
Of fierce Platæa's chief, whose vengeance bursts  
In wide destruction. Embas, Daucus fall,  
Arsæus, Ochus, Mendes, Artias die ; 385  
And ten most hardy of th' immortal guard,  
To shivers breaking on the Grecian shield  
Their gold embellish'd weapons, raise a mound  
O'er thy pale body, O in prime destroy'd,  
Of Asia's garden once the fairest plant, 390  
Fall'n Teribazus ! Thy distracted friend  
From this thy temporary tomb is dragg'd

By

By forceful zeal of satraps to the shore ;  
 Where then the brave Abrocomes arrang'd  
 The succours new, by Abradates brought, 395  
 Orontes and Mazæus. Turning swift,  
 Abrocomes inform'd his brother thus.

STRONG reenforcement from th' immortal guard  
 Pandates bold to Intaphernes leads,  
 In charge to harrafs by perpetual toil 400  
 Those Grecians next the mountain. Thou unite  
 To me thy valour. Here the hostile ranks  
 Less stable seem. Our joint impression try ;  
 Let all the weight of battle here impend.  
 Rouse, Hyperanthes. Give regret to winds.  
 Who hath not lost a friend this direful day ? 405  
 Let not our private cares assist the Greeks  
 Too strong already ; or let sorrow act :  
 Mourn and revenge. These animating words



Send Hyperanthes to the foremost line.

His vengeful ardour leads. The battle joins. 410

Who stemm'd this tide of onset? Who imbru'd  
His shining spear the first in Persian blood?

Eupalamus. Artembares he slew

With Derdas fierce, whom Caucasus had rear'd

On his tempestuous brow, the savage sons 415

Of violence and rapine. But their doom

Fires Hyperanthes, whose vindictive blade

Arrests the victor in his haughty course.

Beneath the strong Abrocomes o'erwhelm'd,

Melissus swells the number of the dead. 420

None could Mycenæ boast of prouder birth,

Than young Melissus, who in silver mail

The line embellish'd. He in Cirrha's mead,

Where high Parnassus from his double top

O'er shades the Pythian games, the envy'd prize 425

Of

Of fame obtain'd. Low sinks his laurell'd head  
In death's cold night ; and horrid gore deforms  
The graceful hair. Impatient to revenge  
Aristobulus strides before the van.

A storm of fury darkens all his brow. 430

Around he rolls his gloomy eye. For death  
Is Alyattes mark'd, of regal blood,  
Deriv'd from Cræsus, once imperial lord  
Of nations. Him the nymphs of Halys wept ;

When, with delusive oracles beguil'd 435

By Delphi's god, he pass'd their fatal waves  
A mighty empire to dissolve : nor knew  
Th' ill-destin'd prince, that envious fortune watch'd  
That direful moment from his hand to wrest

The sceptre of his fathers. In the shade 440

Of humble life his race on Tmolus' brow

Lay hid ; till, rous'd to battle, on this field

Sinks Alyattes, and a royal breed

In

In him extinct forever. Lycis dies,  
For boist'rous war ill-chosen. He was skill'd 445  
To tune the lulling flute, and melt the heart;  
Or with his pipe's awak'ning strain allure  
The lovely dames of Lydia to the dance.  
'They on the verdant level graceful mov'd  
In vary'd measures; while the cooling breeze 450  
Beneath their swelling garments wanton'd o'er  
Their snowy breasts, and smooth Cayster's stream,  
Soft-gliding, murmur'd by. The hostile blade  
Draws forth his entrails. Prone he falls. Not long  
The victor triumphs. From the prostrate corse 455  
Of Lycis while insulting he extracts  
The reeking weapon, Hyperanthes' steel  
Invades his knee, and cuts the finewy cords.  
The Mycenæans with uplifted shields,  
Corinthians and Phliasians close around 450  
The wounded chieftain. In redoubled rage

The



The contest glows. Abrocomes incites  
 Each noble Persian. Each his voice obeys.  
 Here Abradates, there Mazæus press,  
 Orontes and Hydarnes. None retire 455  
 From toil, or peril. Urg'd on ev'ry side,  
 Mycenæ's band to fortune leave their chief.  
 Despairing, raging, destitute he stands,  
 Propt on his spear. His wound forbids retreat.  
 None, but his brother, Eumenes, abides 460  
 The dire extremity. His studded orb  
 Is held defensive. On his arm the sword  
 Of Hyperanthes rapidly descends.  
 Down drops the buckler, and the sever'd hand  
 Resigns its hold. The unprotected pair 465  
 By Asia's hero to the ground are swept;  
 As to a reaper crimson poppies low'r  
 Their heads luxuriant on the yellow plain.  
 From both their breasts the vital currents flow,

And

And mix their streams. Elate the Persians pour 470  
 Their numbers, deep'ning on the foe dismay'd.  
 The Greeks their station painfully maintain.  
 This Anaxander saw, whose faithless tongue  
 His colleague Leontiades bespake.

THE hour is come to serve our Persian friends.  
 Behold, the Greeks are press'd. Let Thebes retire,  
 A bloodless conquest yielding to the king. 477

THIS said, he drew his Thebans from their post,  
 Not with unpunish'd trechery. The lance  
 Of Abradates gor'd their foul retreat; 480  
 Nor knew the Asian chief, that Asia's friends  
 Before him bled. Mean time, as mighty Jove,  
 Or he more ancient on the throne of heav'n,  
 When from the womb of Chaos dark the world  
 Emerg'd to birth, where'er he view'd the jar 485  
 Of

Of atoms yet discordant and unform'd,  
 Confusion thence with pow'rful voice dispell'd,  
 'Till light and order universal reign'd ;  
 So from the hill Leonidas survey'd  
 The various war. He saw the Theban rout ; 490  
 That Corinth, Phlius and Mycenæ look'd  
 Affrighted backward. Instantly his charge  
 Is borne by Maron, whom obedience wings,  
 Precipitating down the sacred cave,  
 That Sparta's ranks, advancing, should repair 495  
 The disunited phalanx. Ere they move,  
 Dieneces inspires them. Fame, my friends,  
 Calls forth your valour in a signal hour.  
 For you this glorious crisis she reserv'd  
 Laconia's splendour to assert. Young man, 500  
 Son of Megistias, follow. He conducts  
 Th' experienc'd troop. They lock their shields,  
 and, wedg'd

In



In dense arrangement, repossess the void,  
Left by the faithless Thebans, and repulse  
Th' exulting Persians. When with efforts vain 505  
These oft renew'd the contest, and recoil'd,  
As oft confounded with diminish'd ranks;  
Lo! Hyperanthes blush'd, repeating late  
The words of Artemisia. Learn, O chiefs,  
The only means of glory and success. 510  
Unlike the others, whom we newly chac'd,  
These are a band, selected from the Greeks,  
Perhaps the Spartans, whom we often hear  
By Demaratus prais'd. To break their line  
In vain we struggle, unarray'd and lax, 515  
Depriv'd of union. Do not we preside  
O'er Asia's armies, and our courage boast,  
Our martial art above the vulgar herd?  
Let us, ye chiefs, attempt in order'd ranks  
To form a troop, and emulate the foe. 520

THEY

THEY wait not dubious. On the Malian shore  
 In gloomy depth a column soon is form'd  
 Of all the nobles, Abradates strong,  
 Orontes bold, Mazæus, and the might  
 Of brave Abrocomes with each, who bore 525  
 The highest honors, and excell'd in arms;  
 Themselves the lords of nations, who before  
 The throne of Xerxes tributary bow'd.  
 To these succeed a chosen number, drawn  
 From Asia's legions, vaunted most in fight; 530  
 Who from their king perpetual stipends share;  
 Who, station'd round the provinces, by force  
 His tyranny uphold. In ev'ry part  
 Is Hyperanthes active, ardent seen  
 Throughout the huge battalion. He adjusts 535  
 Their equal range, then cautious, lest on march  
 Their unaccustom'd order should relax,  
 Full in the center of the foremost rank

Orontes plants, committing to his hand  
 Th' imperial standard ; whose expanded folds 540  
 Glow'd in the air, presenting to the sun  
 The richest dye of Tyre. The royal bird  
 Amid the gorgeous tincture shone express'd  
 In high-embroider'd gold. The wary prince  
 On this conspicuous, leading sign of war 545  
 Commands each satrap, posted in the van,  
 To fix his eye regardful, to direct  
 By this alone his even pace and flow,  
 Retiring, or advancing. So the star,  
 Chief of the spangles on that fancy'd bear, 550  
 Once an Idæan nymph, and nurse of Jove,  
 Bright Cynosura to the Boreal pole  
 Attracts the sailor's eye ; when distance hides  
 The headland signals, and her guiding ray,  
 New-ris'n, she throws. The hero next appoints,  
 That ev'ry warrior through the length'ning files,  
 Observing



Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 67

Observing none, but those before him plac'd, 557

Shall watch their motions, and their steps pursue.

Nor is th' important thicket next the pass

Forgot. Two thousand of th' immortal guard 560

That station seize. His orders all perform'd,

Close by the standard he assumes his post.

Intrepid thence he animates his friends.

HEROIC chieftains, whose unconquer'd force  
Rebellious Ægypt, and the Libyan felt, 565

Think, what the splendour of your former deeds

From you exacts. Remember, from the great

Illustrious actions are a debt to fame.

No middle path remains for them to tread,

Whom she hath once ennobled. Lo! this day

By trophies new will signalize your names, 570

Or in dishonor will forever cloud.

He

HE said, and vig'rous all to fight proceed.  
As, when tempestuous Eurus stems the weight  
Of western Neptune, struggling through the streights,  
Which bound Alcides' labours, here the storm 575  
With rapid wing reverberates the tide ;  
There the contending surge with furrow'd tops  
To mountains swells, and, whelming o'er the beach  
On either coast, impells the hoary foam  
On Mauritanian and Iberian strands : 580  
Such is the dreadful onset. Persia keeps  
Her foremost ranks unbroken, which are fill'd  
By chosen warriors ; while the num'rous croud,  
Though still promiscuous pouring from behind,  
Give weight and pressure to th' embattled chiefs, 585  
Despising danger. Like the mural strength  
Of some proud city, bulwark'd round and arm'd  
With rising tow'rs to guard her wealthy stores,  
Immoveable, impenetrable stood

Laco-

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 69

Laconia's ferry'd phalanx. In their face 590  
Grim tyranny her threat'ning fetters shakes,  
Red havoc grinds insatiable his jaws.  
Greece is behind, entrusting to their swords  
Her laws, her freedom, and the sacred urns  
Of their forefathers. Present now to thought 595  
Their altars rise, the mansions of their birth,  
Whate'er they honor, venerate and love.

BRIGHT in the Persian van th' exalted lance  
Of Hyperanthes flam'd. Beside him press'd  
Abrocomes, Hydarnes, and the bulk 600  
Of Abradates terrible in war.  
Firm, as a Memphian pyramid, was seen  
Dieneces; while Agis close in rank  
With Menalippus, and the added strength  
Of dauntless Maron, their connected shields 605  
Upheld. Each unrelax'd array maintains  
The conflict undecided; nor could Greece  
Repel



Repel the adverse numbers, nor the weight  
Of Asia's band select remove the Greeks.

SWIFT from Laconia's king, perceiving soon  
The Persian's new arrangement, Medon flew, 611  
Who thus the staid Dieneces address'd.

LEONIDAS commands the Spartan ranks  
To measure back some paces. Soon, he deems,  
The unexperienc'd foes in wild pursuit 615  
Will break their order. Then the charge renew.

THIS heard, the signal of retreat is giv'n.  
The Spartans seem to yield. The Persians stop.  
Astonishment restrains them, and the doubt  
Of unexpected victory. Their sloth  
Abrocomes awakens. By the sun 620  
They fly before us. My victorious friends,  
Do you delay to enter Greece. Away,

Rush

Rush on intrepid. I already hear  
 Our horse, our chariots thund'ring on her plains.  
 I see her temples wrapt in Persian fires. 625

HE spake. In hurry'd violence they roll  
 Tumultuous forward. All in headlong pace  
 Disjoin their order, and the line dissolve.  
 This when the sage Dieneces descries, 630  
 The Spartans halt, returning to the charge  
 With sudden vigour. In a moment pierc'd  
 By his resistless steel, Orontes falls,  
 And quits th' imperial banner. This the chief  
 In triumph waves. The Spartans press the foe. 635  
 Close-wedg'd and square, in slow, progressive pace  
 O'er heaps of mangled carcases and arms  
 Invincible they tread. Composing flutes  
 Each thought, each motion harmonize. No rage  
 Untunes their souls. The phalanx yet more deep  
 Of

Of Medon follows ; while the lighter bands 641

Glide by the flanks, and reach the broken foe.

Amid their flight what vengeance from the arm

Of Alpheus falls ? O'er all in swift pursuit

Was he renown'd. His active feet had match'd 645

The son of Peleus in the dusty course ;

But now the wrongs, the long-remember'd wrongs

Of Polydorus animate his strength

With ten fold vigour. Like th' empurpled moon,

When in eclipse her silver disk hath lost 650

The wonted light, his buckler's polish'd face

Is now obscur'd ; the figur'd bosses drop

In crimson, spouting from his deathful strokes.

As, when with horror wing'd, a whirlwind rends

A shatter'd navy ; from the ocean cast, 655

Enormous fragments hide the level beach ;

Such as dejected Persia late beheld

On Thessaly's unnavigable strand :

Thus



Thus o'er the champain satraps lay bestrewn  
 By Alpheus, persevering in pursuit      660  
 Beyond the pass. Not Phoebus could inflict  
 On Niobè more vengeance, when, incens'd  
 By her maternal arrogance, which scorn'd  
 Latona's race, he twang'd his ireful bow,  
 And one by one from youth and beauty hurl'd      165  
 Her sons to Pluto; nor severer pangs  
 That mother felt, than pierc'd the gen'rous soul  
 Of Hyperanthes, while his noblest friends  
 On ev'ry side lay gasping. With despair  
 He still contends. Th' immortals from their stand  
 Behind th' entangling thicket next the pass      671  
 His signal rouses. Ere they clear their way,  
 Well-caution'd Medon from the close defile  
 Two thousand Locrians pours. An aspect new  
 The fight assumes. Through implicated shrubs  
 Confusion waves each banner. Falchions, spears

And shields are all encumber'd; till the Greeks  
Had forc'd a passage to the yielding foe. 678  
Then Medon's arm is felt. The dreadful' boar,  
Wide-wasting once the Calydonian fields, 680  
In fury breaking from his gloomy lair,  
Rang'd with less havoc through unguarded folds,  
Than Medon, sweeping down the glitt'ring files,  
So vainly styl'd immortal. From the cliff  
Divine Melissa, and Laconia's king 685  
Enjoy the glories of Oileus' son.  
Fierce Alpheus too, returning from his chace,  
Joins in the slaughter. Ev'ry Persian falls.

To him the Locrian chief. Brave Spartan,  
thanks.

Through thee my purpose is accomplish'd full. 690  
My phalanx here with levell'd rows of spears  
Shall guard the shatter'd bushes. Come what may  
From

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 75

From Asia's camp, th' assailant, flank'd and  
driv'n

Down yonder slope, shall perish. Gods of Greece,  
You shall behold your fanes profusely deck'd 695  
In splendid off'rings from Barbarian spoils,  
Won by your free-born supplicants this day.

THIS said, he forms his ranks. Their threat-  
'ning points  
Gleam through the thicket, whence the shiv'ring  
foes

Avert their sight, like passengers dismay'd, 700  
Who on their course by Nile's portentous banks  
Descry in ambush of perfidious reeds  
The crocodile's fell teeth. Contiguous lay  
Thernopylæ. Dieneces secur'd

The narrow mouth. Two lines the Spartans  
shew'd, 705



One tow'rd the plain observ'd the Persian camp;  
One, led by Agis, fac'd th' interior pass.

Not yet discourag'd, Hyperanthes strives  
The scatter'd host to rally. He exhorts,  
Entreats, at length indignant thus exclaims. 710

DEGEN'RATE Persians! to sepulchral dust  
Could breath return, your fathers from the tomb  
Would utter groans. Inglorious, do ye leave  
Behind you Persia's standard to adorn  
Some Grecian temple? Can your splendid cars, 715  
Voluptuous couches, and delicious boards,  
Your gold, your gems, ye satraps, be preserv'd  
By cowardice and flight? The eunuch slave  
Will scorn such lords, your women loath your  
beds.

Book VIII. LEONIDAS. 77

Few hear him, fewer follow ; while the fight  
His unabating courage oft renews, 721  
As oft repuls'd with danger : till, by all  
Deserted, mixing in the gen'ral rout,  
He yields to fortune, and regains the camp.  
In short advances thus the dying tide 725  
Beats for awhile against the shelving strand,  
Still by degrees retiring, and at last  
Within the bosom of the main subsides.

THOUGH Hyperanthes from the fight was driv'n,  
Close to the mountain, whose indented side 730  
There gave the widen'd pass an ample space  
For numbers to embattle, still his post  
Bold Intaphernes underneath a cliff  
Against the firm Plataean line maintain'd.  
On him look'd down Leonidas like Death, 735  
When, from his iron cavern call'd by Jove,

He stands gigantic on a mountain's head;  
Whence he commands th' affrighted earth to quake,  
And, crags and forests in his direful grasp  
High-wielding, dashes on a town below, 740  
Whose deeds of black impiety provoke  
The long-enduring gods. Around the verge  
Of Oeta, curving to a crescent's shape,  
The marbles, timbers, fragments lay amass'd.  
The Helots, peasants, mariners attend 745  
In order nigh Leonidas. They watch  
His look. He gives the signal. Rous'd at once  
The force, the skill, activity and zeal  
Of thousands are combin'd. Down rush the piles.  
Trees, roll'd on trees, with mingled rock descend,  
Unintermitted ruin. Loud resound 751  
The hollow trunks against the mountain's side.  
Swift bounds each craggy mass. The foes below  
Look up aghast, in horror shrink and die.

Whose



Whole troops, o'erwhelm'd beneath th' enormous  
load, 755

Lie hid and lost, as never they had known

A name, or being. Intaphernes clad

In regal splendour, progeny of kings,

Who rul'd Damascus, and the Syrian palms,

Here slept forever. Thousands of his train 760

In that broad space the ruins had not reach'd.

Back to their camp a passage they attempt

Through Lacedæmon's line. Them Agis stopp'd.

Before his powerful arm Pandates fell,

Sofarmes, Tachos. Menalippus dy'd 765

His youthful steel in blood. The mightier spear

Of Maron pierc'd battalions, and enlarg'd

The track of slaughter. Backward turn'd the rout,

Nor found a milder fate. Th' unweary'd swords

Of Dithyrambus and Diomedon, 770

Who from the hill are wheeling on their flank,

Still flash tremendous. To the shore they fly,  
 At once envelop'd by successive bands  
 Of different Grecians. From the gulph profound  
 Perdition here inevitable frowns, 775  
 While there, encircled by a grove of spears,  
 They stand devoted hecatombs to Mars.  
 Now not a moment's interval delays  
 Their gen'ral doom ; but down the Malian steep  
 Prone are they hurry'd to th' expanded arms 780  
 Of horror, rising from the oozy deep,  
 And grasping all their numbers, as they fall.  
 The dire confusion like a storm invades  
 The chafing surge. Whole troops Bellona rolls  
 In one vast ruin from the craggy ridge. 785  
 O'er all their arms, their ensigns, deep-engulph'd,  
 With hideous roar the waves forever close.

*The END of the Eighth Book.*

LEONI.

# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the NINTH.

### The Argument.

*Night coming on, the Grecians retire to their tents. A guard is placed on the Phocian wall under the command of Agis. He admits into the camp a lady, accompanied by a single slave, and conducts them to Leonidas; when she discovers herself to be Ariana, sister of Xerxes and Hyperanthes, and sues for the body of Teribazus; which being found among the slain, she kills herself upon it. The slave, who attended her, proves to be Polydorus, brother to Alpheus and Maron, and who had been formerly carried into captivity by a Phœnician pirate. He relates before an assembly of the chiefs a message from Demaratus to the Spartans, which discloses the treachery of the Thebans, and of Epialtes, the Malian, who had undertaken to lead part of the Persian army through a pass among the mountains of Oeta. This information throws the council into a great tu-*



*mult, which is pacified by Leonidas, who sends Alpheus to observe the motions of these Persians, and Dieneces with a party of Lacedæmonians to support the Phocians, with whom the defence of these passages in the hills had been entrusted. In the mean time Agis sends the bodies of Teribazus and Ariana to the camp of Xerxes.*

**I**N sable vesture, spangled o'er with stars,  
The night assum'd her throne. Recall'd from  
war,

Their toil, protracted long, the Greeks forget,  
Dissolv'd in silent slumber, all, but those,  
Who watch th' uncertain perils of the dark, 5  
A hundred warriors. Agis was their chief.  
High on the wall, intent the hero sat.  
Fresh winds across the undulating bay  
From Asia's host the various din convey'd  
In one deep murmur, swelling on his ear. 10  
When by the sound of footsteps down the pass  
Alarm'd, he calls aloud. What feet are these,

Which

IX  
Book ~~VIII~~. LEONIDAS. 83

Which beat the echoing pavement of the rock ?

Reply, nor tempt inevitable fate.

A VOICE reply'd. No enemies we come, 15  
But crave admittance in an humble tone.

THE Spartan answers. Through the midnight  
shade

What purpose draws your wand'ring steps abroad ?

To whom the stranger. We are friends to  
Greece.

Through thy assistance we implore access 20

To Lacedæmon's king. The cautious Greek

Still hesitates ; when musically sweet

A tender voice his wond'ring ear allures.

O GEN'ROUS warrior, listen to the pray'r 25

Of

Of one distress'd, whom grief alone hath led  
 Through midnight shades to these victorious tents,  
 A wretched woman, innocent of fraud.

THE chief, descending, through th' unfolded  
 gates

Upheld a flaming torch. The light disclos'd 30  
 One first in servile garments. Near his side  
 A woman graceful and majestic stood,  
 Not with an aspect, rivalling the pow'r  
 Of fatal Helen, or th' insnaring charms  
 Of love's soft queen, but such, as far surpass'd, 35  
 Whate'er the lilly, blending with the rose,  
 Spreads on the cheek of beauty soon to fade ;  
 Such, as express'd a mind, by wisdom rul'd,  
 By sweetness temper'd ; virtues's purest light  
 Illumining the countenance divine : 40  
 Yet could not soften rig'rous fate, nor charm

Malig-



Malignant fortune to revere the good ;  
Which oft with anguish rends a spotleis heart,  
And oft associates wisdom with despair.  
In courteous phrase began the chief humane.      45

EXALTED fair, whose form adorns the night,  
Forbear to blame the vigilance of war.  
My slow compliance to the rigid laws  
Of Mars impute. In me no longer pause  
Shall from the presence of our king withhold      50  
This thy apparent dignity and worth.

HERE ending, he conducts her. At the call  
Of his lov'd brother from his couch arose  
Leonidas. In wonder he survey'd  
Th' illustrious virgin, whom his presence aw'd.      55  
Her eye submissive to the ground declin'd  
In veneration of the godlike man.

His

His mien, his voice her anxious dread dispel,  
Benevolent and hospitable thus.

THY looks, fair stranger, amiable and great, 60  
A mind delineate, which from all commands  
Supreme regard. Relate, thou noble dame,  
By what relentless destiny compell'd,  
Thy tender feet the paths of darkness tread;  
Rehearse th' afflictions, whence thy virtue mourns.

ON her wan cheek a sudden blush arose 66  
Like day, first dawning on the twilight pale;  
When, wrapt in grief, these words a passage found.

IF to be most unhappy, and to know,  
That hope is irrecoverably fled; 70  
If to be great and wretched may deserve  
Commiseration from the brave: behold,

Thou

Thou glorious leader of unconquer'd bands,

Behold, descended from Darius' loins,

Th' afflicted Ariana ; and my pray'r

25

Accept with pity, nor my tears disdain.

First, that I lov'd the best of human race,

Heroic, wise, adorn'd by ev'ry art,

Of shame unconscious doth my heart reveal.

This day, in Grecian arms conspicuous clad,

80

He fought, he fell. A passion, long conceal'd,

For me alas ! within my brother's arms

His dying breath resigning, he disclos'd.

Oh ! I will stay my sorrows ! will forbid

My eyes to stream before thee, and my breast,

85

O'erwhelm'd by anguish, will from sighs restrain !

For why should thy humanity be griev'd

At my distress, why learn from me to mourn

The lot of mortals, doom'd to pain and woe.

Hear



Hear then, O king, and grant my sole request, 90  
To seek his body in the heaps of slain.

THUS to the hero su'd the royal maid,  
Resembling Ceres in majestic woe,  
When supplicating Jove from Stygian gloom,  
And Pluto's black embraces to redeem 95  
Her lov'd and lost Proserpina. Awhile  
On Ariana fixing stedfast eyes,  
These tender thoughts Leonidas recall'd.

SUCH are thy sorrows, O for ever dear,  
Who now at Lacedæmon dost deplore 100  
My everlasting absence. Then aside  
He turn'd and sigh'd. Recov'ring, he address'd  
His brother. Most beneficent of men,  
Attend, assist this princess. Night retires  
Before the purple-winged morn. A band 105

Is call'd. The well-remember'd spot they find,  
Where Teribazus from his dying hand  
Dropt in their fight his formidable sword.  
Soon from beneath a pile of Asian dead  
They draw the hero, by his armour known. 110

THEN, Ariana, what transcending pangs  
Were thine ! what horrors ! In thy tender breast  
Love still was mightiest. On the bosom cold  
Of Teribazus, grief-distracted maid,  
Thy beauteous limbs were thrown. Thy snowy  
hue 115

The clotted gore disfigur'd. On his wounds  
Loose flow'd thy hair, and, bubbling from thy eyes,  
Impetuous sorrow lav'd th' empurpled clay.  
When forth in groans these lamentations broke,

O TORN for ever from these weeping eyes ! 120

Thou,

Thou, who despairing to obtain a heart,  
 Which then most lov'd thee, didst untimely yield  
 Thy life to fate's inevitable dart  
 For her, who now in agony reveals  
 Her tender passion, who repeats her vows 125  
 To thy deaf ear, who fondly to her own  
 Unites thy cheek insensible and cold.  
 Alas! do those unmoving, ghastly orbs  
 Perceive my gushing sorrow! Can that heart  
 At my complaint dissolve the ice of death 130  
 To share my suff'rings! Never, never more  
 Shall Ariana bend a list'ning ear  
 To thy enchanting eloquence, nor feast  
 Her mind on wisdom from thy copious tongue!  
 Oh! bitter, insurmountable distress! 135

SHE could no more. Invincible despair  
 Suppress'd all utt'rance. As a marble form,

Fix'd



Fix'd on the solemn sepulcher, inclines  
The silent head in imitated woe  
O'er some dead hero, whom his country lov'd; 140  
Entranc'd by anguish, o'er the breathless clay  
So hung the princess. On the gory breach,  
Whence life had issu'd by the fatal blow,  
Mute for a space and motionless she gaz'd;  
When thus in accents firm. Imperial pomp, 145  
Foe to my quiet, take my last farewell.  
There is a state, where only virtue holds  
The rank supreme. My Teribazus there  
From his high order must descend to mine.

THEN with no trembling hand, no change of  
look 150

She drew a poniard, which her garment veil'd;  
And instant sheathing in her heart the blade,  
On her slain lover silent sunk in death.

The

The unexpected stroke prevents the care  
Of Agis, pierc'd by horror and distress 155  
Like one, who, standing on a stormy beach,  
Beholds a found'ring vessel, by the deep  
At once engulph'd ; his pity feels and mourns,  
Depriv'd of pow'r to save : so Agis view'd  
The prostrate pair. He dropp'd a tear and thus. 165

OH ! much lamented ! Heavy on your heads  
Hath evil fall'n, which o'er your pale remains  
Commands this sorrow from a stranger's eye.  
Illustrious ruins ! May the grave impart  
That peace, which life deny'd ! And now receive  
This pious office from a hand unknown. 166

HE spake, unclasping from his shoulders broad  
His ample robe. He strew'd the waving folds

O'er

O'er each wan visage, turning then, address'd  
The slave, in mute dejection standing near. 170

THOU, who attendant on this hapless fair,  
Hast view'd this dreadful spectacle, return.  
These bleeding reliques bear to Persia's king,  
Thou with four captives, whom I free from bonds.

ART thou a Spartan, interrupts the slave? 175  
Dost thou command me to return, and pine  
In climes unblest'd by liberty, or laws?  
Grant me to see Leonidas. Alone  
Let him decide, if wretched, as I seem,  
I may not claim protection from this camp. 180

WHOE'ER thou art, rejoins the chief, amaz'd,  
But not offended, thy ignoble garb  
Conceal'd a spirit, which I now revere.

Thy



Thy countenance demands a better lot,  
Than I, a stranger to thy hidden worth, 185  
Unconscious offer'd. Freedom dwells in Greece,  
Humanity and justice. Thou shalt see  
Leonidas their guardian. To the king  
He leads him straight, presents him in these words.

IN mind superior to the base attire, 190  
Which marks his limbs with shame, a stranger  
comes,  
Who thy protection claims. The slave subjoins.

I STAND thy suppliant now. Thou soon shalt  
learn,

If I deserve thy favor. I request  
To meet th' assembled chieftains of this host. 195  
Oh ! I am fraught with tidings, which import  
The weal of ev'ry Grecian. Agis swift,

Appointed

Appointed by Leonidas, convenes  
 The diff'rent leaders. To the tent they speed.  
 Before them call'd, the stranger thus began. 200

O ALPHEUS ! Maron ! Hither turn your sight,  
 And know your brother. From their seats they  
 start.

From either breaks in ecstasy the name  
 Of Polydorus. To his dear embrace  
 Each fondly strives to rush ; but he withstands : 205  
 While down his cheek a flood of anguish pours  
 From his dejected eyes, in torture bent  
 On that vile garb, dishonoring his form.  
 At length these accents, intermix'd with groans,  
 A passage found, while mute attention gaz'd. 210

You first should know, if this unhappy slave  
 Yet merits your embraces. Then approach'd

Leonidas. Before him all recede,  
 Ev'n Alpheus' self, and yields his brother's hand,  
 Which in his own the regal hero press'd.      215  
 Still Polydorus on his gloomy front  
 Repugnance stern to consolation bore ;  
 When thus the king with majesty benign.

Lo ! ev'ry heart is open to thy worth.  
 Injurious fortune, and enfeebling time      220  
 By servitude and grief severely try  
 A lib'ral spirit. Try'd, but not subdu'd,  
 Do thou appear. Whatever be our lot  
 Is heav'n's appointment. Patience best becomes  
 The citizen and soldier. Let the fight      225  
 Of friends and brethren dissipate thy gloom.

Of men the gentlest, Agis too advanc'd,  
 Who with increas'd humanity began.

Now



Now in thy native liberty secure,  
Smile on thy pass'd affliction, and relate, 230  
What chance restores thy merit to the arms  
Of friends and kindred. Polydorus then.

I WAS a Spartan. When my tender prime  
On manhood border'd, from Laconia's shores  
Snatch'd by Phœnician pirates, I was sold 235  
A slave, by Hyperanthes bought and giv'n  
To Ariana. Gracious was her hand.  
But I remain'd a bondman, still estrang'd  
From Lacedæmon. Demaratus oft  
In friendly sorrow would my lot deplore ; 240  
Nor less his own ill-fated virtue mourn'd,  
Lost to his country in a servile court,  
The center of corruption ; where in smiles  
Are painted envy, trechery and hate  
With rankling malice ; where alone sincere 245

The dissolute seek no disguise : where those,  
Possessing all, a monarch can bestow,  
Are far less happy, than the meanest heir  
To freedom, far more groveling, than the slave,  
Who serves their cruel pride. Yet here the sun 250  
Ten times his yearly circle hath renew'd,  
Since Polydorus hath in bondage groan'd.  
My bloom is pass'd, or, pining in despair,  
Untimely wither'd. I at last return  
A messenger of fate, who tidings bear 255  
Of desolation. Here he paus'd in grief  
Redoubled ; when Leonidas. Proceed.  
Should from thy lips inevitable death  
To all be threaten'd, thou art heard by none,  
Whose dauntless hearts can entertain a thought, 260  
But how to fall the noblest. Thus the king.  
The rest in speechless expectation wait.  
Such was the solemn silence, which o'erspread

The

The shrine of Ammon, or Dodona's shades,  
When anxious mortals from the mouth of Jove  
Their doom explor'd. Nor Polydorus long 265  
Suspends the counsel, but resumes his tale.

As I this night accompany'd the steps  
Of Ariana, near the pass we saw  
A restless form, now traversing the way,  
Now, as a statue, rivetted by doubt, 270  
Then on a sudden starting to renew  
An eager pace. As nearer we approach'd,  
He by the moon, which glimmer'd on our heads,  
Descry'd us. Straight advancing, whither bent  
Our midnight course, he ask'd. I knew the voice  
Of Demaratus. To my breast I clasp'd 276  
The venerable exile, and reply'd.  
Laconia's camp we seek. Demand no more.  
Farewel. He wept. Be heav'n thy guide, he said,



Thrice happy Polydorus. Thou again 280  
Mayst visit Sparta, to these eyes deny'd.  
Soon as arriv'd at those triumphant tents,  
Say to the Spartans from their exil'd king,  
Although their blind credulity depriv'd  
The wretched Demaratus of his home ; 285  
From ev'ry joy seclused, from his wife,  
His offspring torn, his countrymen and friends,  
Him from his virtue they could ne'er divide.  
Say, that ev'n here, where all are kings, or slaves,  
Amid the riot of flagitious courts 290  
Not quite extinct his Spartan spirit glows,  
Though grief hath dimm'd its fires. Rememb'ring  
this,  
Report, that newly to the Persian host  
Return'd a Malian, Epialtes nam'd,  
Who, as a spy, the Grecian tents had fought. 295  
He to the monarch magnify'd his art,  
Which

Which by delusive eloquence had wrought  
 The Greeks to such despair ; that ev'ry band  
 To Persia's sov'reign standard would have bow'd ;  
 Had not the spirit of a single chief,      300  
 By fear unconquer'd, and on death resolv'd,  
 Restor'd their valour : therefore would the king  
 Trust to his guidance a selected force,  
 They soon should pierce th' unguarded bounds of  
                  Greece .

Through a neglected aperture above,      305  
 Where no Leonidas should bar their way :  
 Meantime by him the trech'rous Thebans sent  
 Assurance of their aid. Th' assenting prince  
 At once decreed two myriads to advance  
 With Hyperanthes. Ev'ry lord besides,      310  
 Whom youth, or courage, or ambition warm,  
 Rous'd by the traitor's eloquence, attend  
 From all the nations with a rival zeal

To enter Greece the foremost. In a sigh  
He clos'd—like me. Tremendous from his feat 315  
Uprose Diomedon. His eyes were flames.  
When swift on trembling Anaxander broke  
These ireful accents from his livid lips.

YET ere we fall, O traitor, shall this arm  
To hell's avenging furies sink thy head. 320

ALL now is tumult. Ev'ry bosom swells  
With wrath untam'd and vengeance. Half un-  
sheath'd,

Th' impetuous falchion of Plataea flames.  
But, as the Colchian forcerefs, renown'd  
In legends old, or Circé, when they fram'd 325  
A potent spel, to smoothness charm'd the main,  
And lull'd Æolian rage by mystic song ;  
Till not a billow heav'd against the shore,

Nor



Nor ev'n the wanton-winged zephyr breath'd  
The lightest whisper through the magic air : 330  
So, when thy voice, Leonidas, is heard,  
Confusion listens ; ire in silent aw  
Subsides. Withhold this rashness, cries the king.  
To proof of guilt let punishment succeed.  
Not yet Barbarian shouts our camp alarm. 335  
We still have time for vengeance, time to know,  
If menac'd ruin we may yet repel,  
Or how most glorious perish. Next arose  
Dioneces, and thus th' experienc'd man.

ERE they surmount our fences, Xerxes' troops  
Must learn to conquer, and the Greeks to fly. 341  
The spears of Phocis guard that secret pass.  
To them let instant messengers depart,  
And note the hostile progress. Alpheus here.

LEONIDAS, behold, my willing feet 345

Shall to the Phocians bear thy high commands ;  
Shall climb the hill to watch th' approaching foe.

THOU active son of valour, quick returns  
The chief of Lacedæmon, in my thoughts  
For ever present, when the public weal 350  
Requires the swift, the vigilant and bold.  
Go, climb, surmount the rock's aerial height.  
Observe the hostile march. A Spartan band,  
Dioneces, provide. Thyself conduct  
Their speedy succour to our Phocian friends. 355

THE council rises. For his course prepar'd,  
While day, declining, prompts his eager feet,  
O Polydorus, Alpheus thus in haste,  
Long lost, and late-recover'd, we must part  
Again, perhaps for ever. Thou return 360

I

To

To kiss the sacred soil, which gave thee birth,  
And calls thee back to freedom. Brother dear,  
I should have sighs to give thee—but farewell.  
My country chides me, loit'ring in thy arms.

THIS said, he darts along, nor looks behind, 365  
When Polydorus answers. Alpheus, no.  
I have the marks of bondage to erase.  
My blood must wash the shameful stain away.

WE have a father, Maron interpos'd.  
Thy unexpected presence will revive  
His heavy age, now childless and forlorn. 370

To him the brother with a gloomy frown.  
Ill should I comfort others. View these eyes.  
Faint is their light; and vanish'd was my bloom  
Before its hour of ripeness. In my breast



Grief will retain a mansion, nor by time      375  
Be dispossest's'd. Unceasing shall my soul  
Brood o'er the black remembrance of my youth,  
In slavery exhausted. Life to me  
Hath lost its favour. Then in fullen woe  
His head declines. His brother pleads in vain. 380

Now in his view Dieneces appear'd  
With Sparta's band. Immoveable his eyes  
On them he fix'd, revolving these dark thoughts.

I too like them from Lacedæmon spring,  
Like them instructed once to poise the spear,      385  
To lift the pond'rous shield. Ill-destin'd wretch !  
Thy arm is grown enervate, and would sink  
Beneath a buckler's weight. Malignant fates !  
Who have compell'd my free-born hand to change  
The warrior's arms for ignominious bonds ;      390  
Would

Would you compensate for my chains, my shame,  
 My ten years anguish, and the fell despair,  
 Which on my youth have prey'd ; relenting once,  
 Grant, I may bear my buckler to the field,  
 And, known a Spartan, seek the shades below. 395

WHY to be known a Spartan must thou seek  
 The shades below ? Impatient Maron spake.  
 Live, and be known a Spartan by thy deeds.  
 Live, and enjoy thy dignity of birth.  
 Live and perform the duties, which become 400  
 A citizen of Sparta. Still thy brow  
 Frowns gloomy, still unyielding. He, who leads  
 Our band, all fathers of a noble race,  
 Will ne'er permit thy barren day to close  
 Without an offspring to uphold the state. 405

HE will, replies the brother in a glow,

Prevailing.

Prevailing o'er the paleness of his cheek,  
He will permit me to compleat by death  
The measure of my duty ; will permit  
Me to achieve a service, which no hand 410  
But mine can render, to adorn his fall  
With double lustre, strike the barb'rous foe  
With endless terror, and avenge the shame  
Of an enslav'd Laconian. Closing here  
His words mysterious, quick he turn'd away 415  
To find the tent of Agis. There his hand  
In grateful sorrow minister'd her aid ;  
While the humane, the hospitable care  
Of Agis gently by her lover's corse  
On one sad bier the pallid beauties laid 420  
Of Ariana. He from bondage freed  
Four eastern captives, whom his gen'rous arm  
That day had spar'd in battle ; then began.

This



This solemn charge. You, Persians, whom my  
sword

Acquir'd in war, unransom'd, shall depart. 425

To you I render freedom, which you fought

To wrest from me. One recompence I ask,

And one alone. Transport to Asia's camp

This bleeding princess. Bid the Persian king

Weep o'er this flow'r, untimely cut in bloom. 430

Then say, th' all-judging pow'rs have thus ordain'd.

Thou, whose ambition o'er the groaning earth

Leads desolation ; o'er the nations spreads

Calamity and tears ; thou first shalt mourn,

And through thy house destruction first shall range.

Dismiss'd, they gain the rampart, where on

guard

Was Dithyrambus posted. He perceiv'd

The mournful bier approach. To him the fate

OF

Of Ariana was already told.

He met the captives, with a moisten'd eye, 440

Full bent on Teribazus, sigh'd and spake.

O THAT, assuming with those Grecian arms  
A Grecian spirit, thou in scorn hadst look'd  
On princes ! Worth like thine, from slavish courts  
Withdrawn, had ne'er been wasted to support 445  
A king's injustice. Then a gentler lot  
Had blest'd thy life, or, dying, thou hadst known,  
How sweet is death for liberty. A Greek  
Affords these friendly wishes, though his head  
Had lost the honors, gather'd from thy fall, 450  
When fortune favor'd, or propitious Jove  
Smil'd on the better cause. Ill-fated pair,  
Whom in compassion's purest dew I lave,  
But that my hand infix'd the deathful wound,  
And must be grievous to your loathing shades, 455

From

Book IX. LEONIDAS. 111

From all the neighb'ring valleys would I cull  
Their fairest growth to strew your hearse with  
flow'rs.

Yet, O accept these tears and pious pray'rs !  
May peace furround your ashes ! May your shades  
Pass o'er the silent pool to happier seats ! 460

He ceas'd in tears. The captives leave the wall,  
And slowly down Thermopylæ proceed.

*The END of the Ninth Book.*



LEONI-



# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the TENTH.

### The Argument.

*Medon convenes the Locrian commanders, and harangues them; repairs at midnight to his sister Melissa in the temple, and receives from her the first intelligence, that the Persians were in actual possession of the upper Streights, which had been abandoned by the Phocians. Melibæus brings her tidings of her father's death. She strictly enjoins her brother to preserve his life by a timely retreat, and recommends the enforcement of her advice to the prudence and zeal of Melibæus. In the morning the bodies of Teribazus and Ariana are brought into the presence of Xerxes, soon after a report had reached the camp, that great part of his navy was shipwrecked. The Persian monarch, quite dispirited, is persuaded by Argestes to send an ambassador to the Spartan king. Argestes himself is deputed, who, after revealing his embassy in secret to Leonidas, is by him*  
led

*led before the whole army, and there receives his answer. Alpheus returns, and declares, that the enemy was master of the passages in the hills, and would arrive at Thermopylæ the next morning; upon which Leonidas offers to send away all the troops except his three hundred Spartans; but Diomedon, Demophilus, Dithyrambus and Megistias refuse to depart: then to relieve the perplexity of Medon on this occasion, he transfers to him the supreme command, dismisses Argestes, orders the companions of his own fate to be ready in arms by sunset, and retires to his pavilion.*

**T**HE Grecian leaders, from the counsel ris'n,  
Among the troops dispersing, by their  
words,

Their looks undaunted warm the coldest heart  
Against new dangers threat'ning. To his tent  
The Locrian captains Medon swift convenes, 5  
Exhorting thus. O long-approv'd my friends,  
You, who have seen my father in the field  
Triumphant, bold assistants of my arm

In

In labours not inglorious, who this day  
Have rais'd fresh trophies, be prepar'd. If help 10  
Be further wanted in the Phocian camp,  
You will the next be summon'd. Locris lies  
To ravage first expos'd. Your ancient fane,  
Your goddesses, your priests half-ador'd,  
The daughter of Oileus, from your swords 15  
Protection claim against an impious foe.

ALL anxious for Melissa, he dismiss'd  
Th' applauding vet'rans; to the sacred cave  
Then hasten'd. Under heav'n's night-shaded cope  
He mus'd. Melissa in her holy place 20  
How to approach with inauspicious steps,  
How to accost his pensive mind revolv'd:  
When Mycon, pious vassal of the fane,  
Descending through the cavern, at the sight  
Of Medon stopp'd, and thus. Thy presence, lord,  
The



The priestess calls. To Lacedæmon's king 26

I bear a message, suff'ring no delay.

He quits the chief, whose rapid feet ascend,  
 Soon ent'ring, where the pedestal displays  
 Thy form, Calliopè sublime. The lyre, 30  
 Whose accents immortality confer,  
 Thy fingers seem to wake. On either side,  
 The snowy gloss of Parian marble shews  
 Four of thy sisters through surrounding shade.  
 Before each image is a virgin plac'd. 35  
 Before each virgin dimly burns a lamp,  
 Whose livid spires just temper with a gleam  
 The dead obscurity of night. Apart  
 The priestess thoughtful sits. Thus Medon breaks  
 The solemn silence. Anxious for thy state 40  
 Without a summons to thy pure abode  
 I was approaching. Deities, who know

The

The present, pass'd and future, let my lips,  
Unblam'd, have utterance. Thou, my sister, hear.  
Thy breast let wisdom strengthen. Impious foes  
Through Oeta now are passing. She replies. 46

ARE passing, brother ! They alas ! are pass'd,  
Are in possession of the upper Streight.  
Hear in thy turn. A dire narration hear.  
A favor'd goat, conductor of my herd, 50  
Stray'd to a dale, whose outlet is the post  
To Phocians left, and penetrates to Greece.  
Him Mycon following, by a hostile band,  
Light-arm'd forerunners of a num'rous host,  
Was seiz'd. By fear of menac'd torments forc'd,  
He shew'd a passage up that mountain's side, 56  
Whose length of wood o'er shades the Phocian land.  
To dry and sapless trunks in different parts  
Fire, by the Persians artfully apply'd,

Soon

Soon grew to flames. This done, the troop re-  
turn'd, 60

Detaining Mycon. Now the mountain blaz'd.

The Phocians, ill-commanded, left their post,

Alarm'd, confus'd. More distant ground they chose.

In blind delusion forming there, they spread

Their ineffectual banners to repel 65

Imagin'd peril from those fraudulent lights,

By stratagem prepar'd. A real foe

Meantime secur'd the undefended pass.

This Mycon saw. Escaping thence to me,

He by my orders hastens to inform 70

Leonidas. She paus'd. Like one, who sees

The forked light'ning into shivers rive

A knotted oak, or crumble tow'rs to dust,

Aghast was Medon ; then, recov'ring, spake.

THOU boasted glory of th' Oïlean house, 75

If



If e'er thy brother bow'd in rev'rence due  
To thy superior virtues, let his voice  
Be now regarded. From th' endanger'd fane,  
My sister, fly. Whatever be my lot,  
A troop select of Locrians shall transport 80  
Thy sacred person, where thy will ordains.

THINK not of me, returns the dame. To  
Greece

Direct thy zeal. My peasants are conven'd,  
That by their labour, when the fatal hour  
Requires, with massy fragments I may bar 85  
That cave to human entrance. Best lov'd  
Of brothers, now a serious ear incline.  
Awhile in Greece to fortune's wanton gale  
His golden banner shall the Persian king,  
Deluded, wave. Leonidas, by death 90  
Preserving Sparta, will his spirit leave

To

Book X. LEONIDAS. 119

To blast the glitt'ring pageant. Medon, live  
To share that glory. Thee to perish here  
No law, no oracle enjoins. To die,  
Uncall'd, is blameful. Let thy pious hand 95  
Secure Oileus from Barbarian force.

To Sparta mindful of her noble host  
Entrust his rev'rend head. Th' assembled hinds,  
Youths, maidens, wives with nurfplings at their  
breasts,

Around her now in consternation stood, 100  
The women weeping, mute, aghast the men.  
To them she turns. You never, faithful race,  
Your priestess shall forsake. Melissa here,  
Despairing never of the public weal,

For better days in solitude shall wait, 105  
Shall cheer your sadness. My prophetic soul  
Sees through time's cloud the liberty of Greece  
More stable, more effulgent. In his blood

Leo-

Leonidas cements th' unshaken base  
Of that strong tow'r, which Athens shall exalt 110  
To cast a shadow o'er the eastern world.

THIS utter'd, tow'rd the temple's inmost feat  
Of sanctity her solemn step she bends,  
Devout, enraptur'd. In their dark'ning lamps  
The pallid flames are fainting. Dim through mists  
The morning peeps. An awful silence reigns. 116  
While Medon pensive from the fane descends,  
But instant reappears. Behind him close  
Treads Melibœus, through the cavern's mouth  
Ascending pale in aspect, not unlike 120  
What legends tell of spectres, by the force  
Of necromantic sorcery constrain'd ;  
Through earths dark bowels, which the spell dis-  
join'd,  
They from death's mansion in reluctant sloth



Book X. LEONIDAS. 121

Rose to divulge the secrets of their graves, 125  
Or mysteries of fate. His cheerful brow,  
O'erclouded, paleness on his healthful cheek,  
A dull, unwonted heaviness of pace  
Portend disastrous tidings. Medon spake.

TURN, holy sister. By the gods belov'd, 130  
May they sustain thee in this mournful hour.  
Our father, good Oileus is no more.  
Rehearse thy tidings, swain. He takes the word.

THOU wast not present, when his mind, out-  
stretch'd  
By zeal for Greece, transported by his joy 135  
To entertain Leonidas, refus'd  
Due rest. Old age his ardour had forgot,  
To his last waking moment with his guest  
In rapt'rous talk redundant. He at last,

Compos'd and smiling in th' embrace of sleep, 140  
To Pan's protection at the island fane  
Was left. He wak'd no more. The fatal news,  
To you discover'd, from the chiefs I hide.

MELISSA heard, inclin'd her forehead low  
Before th' insculptur'd deities. A sigh 145  
Broke from her heart, these accents from her lips.

THE full of days and honors through the gate  
Of painless slumber is retir'd. His tomb  
Shall stand among his fathers in the shade  
Of his own trophies. Placid were his days, 150  
Which flow'd through blessings. As a river pure,  
Whose fides are flow'ry, and whose meadows fair,  
Meets in his course a subterranean void ;  
There dips his silver head, again to rise,

And,

And, rising, glide through flow'rs and meadows  
new : 155

So shall Oileus in those happier fields,  
Where never tempests roar, nor humid clouds  
In mists dissolve, nor white-descending flakes  
Of winter violate th' eternal green ;  
Where never gloom of trouble shades the mind, 160  
Nor gust of passion heaves the quiet breast,  
Nor dews of grief are sprinkled. Thou art gone,  
Host of divine Leonidas on earth,  
Art gone before him to prepare the feast,  
Immortalizing virtue. Silent here, 165  
Around her head she wraps her hallow'd pall.  
Her prudent virgins interpose a hymn,  
Not in a plaintive, but majestic flow,  
To which their fingers, sweeping o'er the chords,  
The lyre's full tone attemper. She unveils, 170  
Then with a voice, a countenance compos'd.



Go, Medon, pillar of th' Oïlean house.  
New cares, new duties claim thy precious life.  
Perform the pious obsequies. Let tears,  
Let groans be absent from the sacred dust, 175  
Which heav'n in life so favor'd, more in death.  
A term of righteous days, an envy'd urn  
Like his, for Medon is Melissa's pray'r.  
Thou, Melibœus, cordial, high in rank  
Among the prudent, warn and watch thy lord. 180  
My benediction shall reward thy zeal.

SOOTH'D by the blessings of such perfect lips,  
They both depart. And now the climbing sun  
To Xerxes' tent discover'd from afar  
The Persian captives with their mournful load. 185  
Before them rumour through her fable trump  
Breathes lamentation. Horror lends his voice  
To spread the tidings of disastrous fate

Along

Along Spercheos. As a vapour black,  
Which, from the distant, horizontal verge 190  
Ascending, nearer still and nearer bends  
To higher lands its progress, there condens'd,  
Throws darkness o'er the valleys, while the face  
Of nature saddens round; so step by step,  
In motion flow th' advancing bier diffus'd 195  
A solemn sadness o'er the camp. A hedge  
Of trembling spears on either hand is form'd.  
Tears underneath his iron-pointed cone  
The Sacian drops. The Caspian savage feels  
His heart transpierc'd, and wonders at the pain. 200  
In Xerxes' presence are the bodies plac'd,  
Nor he forbids. His agitated breast  
All night had weigh'd against his future hopes  
His present losses, his defeated ranks,  
By myriads thinn'd, their multitude abash'd, 205  
His fleet thrice-worsted, torn by storms, reduc'd

To half its number. When he slept, in dreams  
He saw the haggard dead, which floated round  
Th' adjoining strands. Disasters new their ghosts  
In sullen frowns, in shrill upbraidings bode. 210  
Thus, ere the gory bier approach'd his eyes,  
He in dejection had already lost  
His kingly pride, the parent of disdain,  
And cold indifference to human woes.  
Not ev'n beside his sister's nobler corse 215  
Her humble lover could awake his scorn.  
The captives told their piercing tale. He heard;  
He felt awhile compassion. But ere long  
Those traces vanish'd from the tyrant's breast.  
His former gloom redoubles. For himself 220  
His anxious bosom heaves, oppress'd by fear,  
Lest he with all his splendour should be cast  
A prey to fortune. Thoughtful near the throne  
Laconia's exile waits, to whom the king.

O DE-



O DEMARATUS, what will fate ordain !      225  
Lo ! fortune turns against me. What shall check  
Her further malice, when her daring stride  
Invades my house with ravage, and profanes  
The blood of great Darius. I have sent  
From my unguarded side the chosen band,      230  
My bravest chiefs to pass the desert hill ;  
Have to the conduct of a Malian spy  
My hopes entrusted. May not there the Greeks  
In opposition more tremendous still,  
More ruinous, than yester sun beheld,      235  
Maintain their post invincible, renew  
Their stony thunder in augmented rage,  
And send whole quarries down the craggy steeps  
Again to crush my army ? Oh ! unfold  
Thy secret thoughts, nor hide the harshlest truth.  
Say, what remains to hope ? The exile here.      241

Too well, O monarch, do thy fears presage,  
What may betal thy army. If the Greeks,  
Arrang'd within Thermopylæ, a pass  
Accessible and practic'd, could repel 245  
With such destruction their unnumber'd foes ;  
What scenes of havoc may untrodden paths,  
Confin'd among the craggy hills, afford ?

Lost in despair, the monarch silent sat. 250  
Not less unmann'd, than Xerxes, from his place  
Uprose Argestes ; but concealing fear,  
These artful words deliver'd. If the king  
Propitious wills to spare his faithful bands,  
Nor spread at large the terrors of his pow'r ; 255  
More gentle means of conquest, than by arms,  
Nor less secure may artifice supply.  
Renown'd Darius, thy immortal fire  
Bright in the spoil of kingdoms, long in vain

The

Book X. LEONIDAS. 129

The fields of proud Euphrates with his host 260  
O'erspread. At length, confiding in the wiles  
Of Zopyrus, the mighty prince subdu'd  
The Babylonian ramparts. Who shall count  
The thrones and states, by stratagem o'erturn'd ?  
But if corruption join her pow'rful aid, 265  
Not one can stand. What race of men possess  
That probity, that wisdom, which the veil  
Of craft shall never blind, nor proffer'd wealth,  
Nor splendid pow'r seduce ? O Xerxes, born  
To more, than mortal greatness, canst thou find 270  
Through thy unbounded sway no dazzling gift,  
Which may allure Leonidas ? Dispel  
The cloud of sadness from those sacred eyes.  
Great monarch, proffer to Laconia's chief,  
What may thy own magnificence declare, 175  
And win his friendship. O'er his native Greece  
Invest him sov'reign. Thus procure his sword



For thy succeeding conquests. Xerxes here,  
As from a trance awak'ning, swift replies.

Wise are thy dictates. Fly to Sparta's chief. 280  
Argestes, fall before him. Bid him join  
My arms, and reign o'er ev'ry Grecian state.

He scarce had finish'd, when in haste approach'd  
Artuchus. Startled at the ghastly stage  
Of death, that guardian of the Persian fair. 285  
Thus in a groan. Thou deity malign,  
O Arimanius, what a bitter draught  
For my sad lips thy cruelty hath mix'd !  
Is this the flow'r of women, to my charge  
Solately giv'n ? Oh ! princess, I have rang'd 290  
The whole Sperchean valley, woods and caves,  
In quest of thee, found here a lifeless corse.  
Astonishment and horror lock my tongue."

PRIDE

PRIDE now, reviving in the monarch's breast,  
Dispell'd his black despondency awhile,      295  
With gall more black effacing from his heart:  
Each merciful impressi<sup>o</sup>n.      Stern he spake.

REMOVE her, satrap, to the female train.  
Let them the due solemnities perform.  
But never she, by Mithra's light I swear,      300  
Shall sleep in Susa with her kindred dust;  
Who by ignoble passions hath debas'd  
The blood of Xerxes.      Greece beheld her shame;  
Let Greece behold her tomb.      The low-born slave,  
Who dar'd to Xerxes' sister lift his hopes,      305  
On some bare crag expose.      The Spartan here.

My royal patron, let me speak—and die,  
If such thy will.      This cold, disfigur'd clay  
Was late thy soldier, gallantly who fought,

Who

Who nobly perish'd, long the dearest friend 310  
Of Hyperanthes, hazarding his life  
Now in thy cause. O'er Persians thou dost reign;  
None more, than Persians, venerate the brave.

WELL hath he spoke, Atruchus firm subjoins.  
But if the king his rigour will inflict 315  
On this dead warrior—Heav'n, o'erlook the deed,  
Nor on our heads accumulate fresh woes!  
The shatter'd fleet, th' intimidated camp,  
The band select, through Oeta's dang'rous wilds  
At this dread crisis struggling, must obtain 320  
Support from heav'n, or Asia's glory falls.

FELL pride, recoiling at these awful words.  
In Xerxes' frozen bosom, yields to fear,  
Resuming there the sway. He grants the corse-

To



To Demaratus.    Forth Artuchus moves      325

Behind the bier, uplifted by his train.

ARGESTES, parted from his master's side,  
Ascends a car ; and, speeding o'er the beach,  
Sees Artemisia.    She the ashes pale  
Of slaughter'd Carians, on the pyre consum'd, 330  
Was then collecting for the fun'ral vase  
In exclamation thus.    My subjects, lost  
On earth, descend to happier climes below——  
The fawning, dastard counsellors, who left  
Your worth deserted in the hour of need,      335  
May kites disfigure, may the wolf devour——  
Shade of my husband, thou salute in smiles  
These gallant warriors, faithful once to thee,  
Nor less to me.    They tidings will report  
Of Artemisia to revive thy love——      340  
May wretches like Argestes never clasp

Their

Their wives, their offspring ! Never greet their  
homes !

May their unbury'd limbs dismiss their ghosts

To wail for ever on the banks of Styx !

THEN, turning tow'r'd her son. Come, virtuous  
boy.

345

Let us transport these reliques of our friends

To yon tall bark, in pendent sable clad.

They, if her keel be destin'd to return,

Shall in paternal monuments repose.

Let us embark. Till Xerxes shuts his ear.

350

To false Argestes ; in her vessel hid,

Shall Artemisia's gratitude lament

Her bounteous sov'reign's fate. Leander, mark.

The Doric virtues are not eastern plants.

Them foster still within thy gen'rous breast;

355

But keep in covert from the blaze of courts ;

Where

Where flatt'ry's guile in oily words profuse,  
In action tardy, o'er th' ingenuous tongue,  
The arm of valour, and the faithful heart  
Will ever triumph. Yet my foul enjoys  
Her own presage, that destiny reserves 360  
An hour for my revenge. Concluding here,  
She gains the fleet. Argestes sweeps along  
On rapid wheels from Artemisia's view,  
Like Night, protectress foul of heinous deeds,  
With treason, rape and murder at her heel, 365  
Before the eye of morn retreating swift  
To hide her loathsome visage. Soon he reach'd  
Thermopylæ; descending from his car,  
Was led by Dithyrambus to the tent  
Of Sparta's ruler. Since the fatal news 370  
By Mycon late deliver'd, he apart  
With Polydorus had consulted long  
On high attempts; and, now sequester'd, fat



To ruminate on vengeance. At his feet  
Prone fell the satrap, and began. The will 375  
Of Xerxes bends me prostrate to the earth  
Before thy presence. Great and matchless chief,  
Thus says the lord of Asia. Join my arms ;  
Thy recompense is Greece. Her fruitful plains,  
Her gen'rous flocks, her flocks, her num'rous  
towns, 380  
Her sons I render to thy sov'reign hand.  
And, O illustrious warrior, heed my words.  
Think on the bliss of royalty, the pomp  
Of courts, their endless pleasures, trains of slaves,  
Who restless watch for thee, and thy delights : 385  
Think on the glories of unrivall'd sway.  
Look on th' Ionic, on th' Æolian Greeks.  
From them their phantome liberty is flown ;  
While in each province, rais'd by Xerxes' pow'r,  
Some favor'd chief presides ; exalted state, 390  
Ne'er

Ne'er giv'n by envious freedom. On his head  
He bears the gorgeous diadem ; he sees  
His equals once in adoration stoop  
Beneath his footstool. What superior beams  
Will from thy temples blaze, when gen'ral Greece,  
In noblest states abounding, calls thee lord, 396  
Thee only worthy. How will each rejoice  
Around thy throne, and hail th' auspicious day,  
When thou, distinguish'd by the Persian king,  
Didst in thy sway consenting nations bless, 400  
Didst calm the fury of unsparing war,  
Which else had delug'd all with blood and flames.

LEONIDAS replies not, but commands  
The Thespian youth, still watchful near the tent,  
To summon all the Grecians. He obeys. 405  
The king uprises from his seat, and bids  
The Persian follow. He, amaz'd, attends,

Sur-

Surrounded soon by each assembling band ;  
When thus at length the godlike Spartan spake.

HERE, Persian, tell thy embassy. Repeat, 410  
That to obtain my friendship Asia's prince  
To me hath proffer'd sov'reignty o'er Greece.  
Then view these bands, whose valour shall preserve  
That Greece unconquer'd, which your king be-  
flows ;

Shall strew your bodies on her crimson'd plains : 415  
The indignation, painted on their looks,  
Their gen'rous scorn may answer for their chief.  
Yet from Leonidas, thou wretch, inur'd  
To vassalage and baseness, hear. The pomp,  
The arts of pleasure in despotic courts 420  
I spurn abhorrent. In a spotless heart  
I look for pleasure. I from righteous deeds  
Derive my splendour. No adoring croud,

No



No purpled slaves, no mercenary spears  
My state embarrass. I in Sparta rule 425  
By laws, my rulers, with a guard unknown  
To Xerxes, public confidence and love.  
No pale suspicion of th' empoison'd bowl,  
Th' assassin's poniard, or provok'd revolt  
Chace from my decent couch the peace, deny'd 430  
To his resplendent canopy. Thy king,  
Who hath profan'd by proffer'd bribes my ear,  
Dares not to meet my arm. Thee, trembling  
    slave,  
Whose embassy was treason, I despise,  
And therefore spare. Diomedon subjoins. 435

OUR marble temples these Barbarians waste,  
A crime less impious, than a bare attempt  
Of sacrilege on virtue. Grant my suit,  
Thou living temple, where the goddess dwells.

To

To me consign the caitiff. Soon the winds 440  
Shall parch his limbs on Oeta's tallest pine.

AMIDST his fury suddenly return'd  
The speed of Alpheus. All, suspended, fix'd  
On him their eyes impatient. He began.

I AM return'd a messenger of ill. 445  
Close to the passage, op'ning into Greece,  
That post committed to the Phocian guard,  
O'erhangs a bushy cliff. A station there  
Behind the shrubs by dead of night I took,  
Though not in darkness. Purple was the face 450  
Of heav'n. Beneath my feet the valleys glow'd.  
A range immense of wood-invested hills,  
The boundaries of Greece, were clad in flames;  
An act of froward chance, or crafty foes  
To cast dismay. The crackling pines I heard; 455  
Their

Book X. LEONIDAS.

141

Their branches sparkled, and the thickets blaz'd.

In hillocks embers rose. Embod'y'd fire,

As from unnumber'd furnaces, I saw

Mount high through vacant trunks of headless  
oaks,

Broad-bas'd, and dry with age. Barbarian helms,

Shields, javelins, sabres, gleaming from below, 461

Full soon discover'd to my tortur'd sight

The streights in Persia's pow'r. The Phocian  
chief,

Whate'er the cause, relinquishing his post,

Was to a neighb'ring eminence remov'd; 465

There, by the foe neglected, or contemn'd,

Remain'd in arms, and neither fled, nor fought.

I stay'd for day spring. Then the Persian mov'd.

To-morrow's sun will see their numbers here.

HE said no more. Unutterable fear 470

In



In horrid silence wraps the lift'ning croud, 475  
Aghast, confounded. Silent are the chiefs,  
Who feel no terror ; yet in wonder fix'd,  
Thick-wedg'd, inclose Leonidas around,  
Who thus in calmest elocution spake.

I now behold the oracle fulfill'd. 480  
Then art thou near, thou glorious, sacred hour,  
Which shalt my country's liberty secure.  
Thrice hail ! thou solemn period. Thee the  
tongues

Of virtue, fame and freedom shall proclaim,  
Shall celebrate in ages yet unborn. 485  
Thou godlike offspring of a godlike fire,  
To him my kindest greetings, Medon, bear.  
Farewel, Megistias, holy friend and brave.  
Thou too, experienc'd, venerable chief,  
Demophilus, farewel. Farwel to thee, 490

Invin-

Invincible Diomedon, to thee,  
Unequall'd Dithyrambus, and to all,  
Ye other dauntless warriors, who may claim  
Praise from my lips, and friendship from my heart.  
You after all the wonders, which your swords 495  
Have here accomplish'd, will enrich your names  
By fresh renown. Your valour must compleat,  
What ours begins. Here first th' astonish'd foe  
On dying Spartans shall with terror gaze,  
And tremble, while he conquers. Then, by fate  
Led from his dreadful victory to meet 501  
United Greece in phalanx o'er the plain,  
By your avenging spears himself shall fall.

FORTH from the assembly strides Plataea's chief.  
By the twelve gods, enthron'd in heav'n supreme;  
By my fair name, unsully'd yet, I swear, 505  
Thine eye, Leonidas, shall ne'er behold  
Diomedon forsake thee. First let strength

Desert

Desert my limbs, and fortitude my heart.  
Did I not face the Marathonian war?  
Have I not seen the Thermopylæ? What more 510  
Can fame bestow, which I should wait to share?  
Where can I, living, purchase brighter praise,  
Than dying here? What more illustrious tomb  
Can I obtain, than, bury'd in the heaps  
Of Persians, fall'n my victims, on this rock 515  
To lie distinguish'd by a thousand wounds?

HE ended; when Demophilus. O king  
Of Lacedæmon, pride of human race,  
Whom none e'er equall'd, but the seed of Jove, 520  
Thy own forefather, number'd with the gods,  
Lo! I am old. With falt'ring steps I tread  
The prone descent of years. My country claim'd  
My youth, my ripeness. Feeble age but yields  
An empty name of service. What remains 525



For me unequal to the winged speed  
Of active hours, which court the swift and young?  
What eligible wish can wisdom form,  
But to die well? Demophilus shall close  
With thee, O hero, on this glorious earth 530  
His eve of life. The youth of Thespia next  
Address'd Leonidas. O first of Greeks,  
Me too think worthy to attend thy fame,  
With this most dear, this venerable man,  
Forever honor'd from my tend' rest age, 537  
Ev'n till on life's extremity we part.  
Nor too aspiring let my hopes be deem'd;  
Should the Barbarian in his triumph mark  
My youthful limbs among the gory heaps,  
Perhaps remembrance may unnerve his arm 540  
In future fields of contest with a race,  
To whom the flow'r, the blooming joys of life  
Are less alluring, than a noble death.

To him his second parent. Wilt thou bleed,  
My Dithyrambus? But I here withhold 545  
All counsel from thee, who art wise, as brave.  
I know thy magnanimity. I read  
Thy gen'rous thoughts. Decided is thy choice.  
Come then, attendants on a godlike shade,  
When to th' Elysian ancestry of Greece 550  
Descends her great protector, we will shew  
To Harmatides an illustrious son,  
No unworthy brother. We will link  
Our shields together. We will press the ground,  
Still undivided in the arms of death. 555  
So if th' attentive traveller we draw  
To our cold reliques, wond'ring, shall he trace  
The diff'rent scene, then pregnant with applause,  
O wise old man, exclaim, the hour of fate  
Well didst thou chuse; and, O unequall'd youth,  
Who for thy country didst thy bloom devote, 361  
May'st

May'st thou remain forever dear to fame !  
 May time rejoice to name thee ! O'er thy urn  
 May everlasting peace her pinion spread.

THIS said, the hero with his lifted shield 565  
 His face o'er shades ; he drops a secret tear :  
 Not this a tear of anguish, but deriv'd  
 From fond affection, grown mature with time,  
 Awak'd a manly tenderness alone,  
 Unmix'd with pity, or with vain regret.

A STREAM of duty, gratitude and love  
 Flow'd from the heart of Harmatides' son,  
 Addressing straight Leonidas, whose looks  
 Declar'd unspeakable applause. O king  
 Of Lacedæmon, now distribute praise 575  
 From thy accustom'd justice, small to me,  
 To him a portion large. His guardian care,



His kind instruction, his example train'd  
My infancy, my youth. From him I learn'd  
To live, unspotted. Could I less, than learn 580  
From him to die with honor. Medon hears.  
Shook by a whirlwind of contending thoughts  
Strong heaves his manly bosom, under aw  
Of wife Melissa, torn by friendship, fir'd  
By such example high. In dubious state 585  
So rolls a vessel, when th' inflated waves  
Her planks assail, and winds her canvass rend ;  
The rudder labours, and requires a hand  
Of firm, delib'rate skill. The gen'rous king  
Perceive's the hero's struggle, and prepares 590  
To interpose relief ; when instant came  
Dieneces before them. Short he spake.

BARBARIAN myriads through the secret pass  
Have enter'd Greece. Leonidas, by morn

Expect

Expect them here. My slender force I spar'd. 595  
 There to have died was useless. We return  
 With thee to perish. Union of our strength  
 Will render more illustrious to ourselves,  
 And to the foe more terrible our fall.

MEGISTIAS last accosts Laconia's king. 600  
 Thou, whom the gods have chosen to exalt  
 Above mankind in virtue and renown,  
 O call not me presumptuous, who implore  
 Among these heroes thy regardful ear.  
 To Lacedæmon I a stranger came, 605  
 There found protection. There to honors rais'd,  
 I have not yet the benefit repaid.  
 That now the gen'rous Spartans may behold  
 In me their large beneficence not vain,  
 Here to their cause I consecrate my breath. 610

Not so, Megistias, interpos'd the king.  
Thou and thy son retire. Again the fear.

FORBID it, thou eternally ador'd,  
O Jove, confirm my persevering soul !  
Nor let me these auspicious moments lose, 615  
When to my bounteous patrons I may show,  
That I deserv'd their favor. Thou, my child,  
Dear Menalippus, heed the king's command,  
And my paternal tenderness revere.  
Thou from these ranks withdraw thee, to my use  
Thy arms surrend'ring. Fortune will supply 621  
New proofs of valour. Vanquish then, or find  
A glorious grave ; but spare thy father's eye  
'The bitter anguish to behold thy youth  
Untimely bleed before him. Grief suspends 625  
His speech, and interchangeably their arms

Impart



Impart the last embraces. Either weeps,  
The hoary parent, and the blooming son.

BUT from his temples the pontific wreath  
Megistias now unloosens. He resigns 630  
His hallow'd vestments ; while the youth in tears  
The helmet o'er his parent's snowy locks,  
O'er his broad chest adjusts the radiant mail.

DIENECEs was nigh. Oppress'd by shame,  
His downcast visage Menalippus hid 635  
From him, who cheerful thus. Thou needst not  
blush.

Thou hearst thy father and the king command,  
What I suggested, thy departure hence.

Train'd by my care, a soldier thou return'st.  
Go, practice my instructions. Oft in fields 640

Of future conflict may thy prowess call  
Me to remembrance. Spare thy words. Farewel.

WHILE such contempt of life, such fervid zeal  
To die with glory animate the Greeks,  
Far diff'rent thoughts possess Argestes' soul. 645  
Amaze and mingled terror chill his blood.  
Cold drops, distill'd from ev'ry pore, bedew  
His shiv'ring flesh. His bosom pants. His knees  
Yield to their burden. Ghastly pale his cheeks,  
Pale are his lips and trembling. Such the minds  
Of slaves corrupt ; on them the beauteous face 651  
Of virtue turns to horror. But these words  
From Lacedæmon's chief the wretch relieve.

RETURN to Xerxes. Tell him, on this rock  
The Grecians faithful to their trust await 655  
His chosen myriads. Tell him, thou hast seen,  
How

How far the lust of empire is below  
A freeborn spirit ; that my death, which seals  
My country's safety, is indeed a boon,  
His folly gives, a precious boon, which Greece 660  
Will by perdition to his throne repay.

HE said. The Persian hastens through the pass.  
Once more the stern Diomedon arose.  
Wrath overcast his forehead, while he spake.

YET more must stay and bleed. Detested  
Thebes 665

Ne'er shall receive her traitors back. This spot  
Shall see their perfidy atton'd by death,  
Ev'n from that pow'r, to which their abject hearts  
Have sacrific'd their faith. Nor dare to hope,  
Ye vile deserters of the public weal, 670  
Ye coward slaves, that, mingled in the heaps



Of gen'rous victims to their country's good,  
You shall your shame conceal. Whoe'er shall pass  
Along this field of glorious slain, and mark  
For veneration ev'ry nobler corse; 675  
His heart, though warm in rapturous applause,  
Awhile shall curb the transport to repeat  
His execrations o'er such impious heads,  
On whom that fate, to others yielding fame,  
Is infamy and vengeance. Dreadful thus 680  
On the pale Thebans sentence he pronounc'd,  
Like Rhadamanthus from th' infernal seat  
Of judgment, which inexorably dooms  
The guilty dead to ever-during pain;  
While Phlegethon his flaming volumes rolls 685  
Before their sight, and ruthless furies shake  
Their hissing serpents. All the Greeks assent  
In clamours, echoing through the concave rock.

Forth Anaxander in th' assembly stood,  
Which he address'd with indignation feign'd. 690

If yet your clamours, Grecians, are allay'd,  
Lo ! I appear before you to demand,  
Why these my brave companions, who alone  
Among the Thebans through dissuading crouds  
Their passage forc'd to join your camp, should bear  
The name of traitors ? By an exil'd wretch 696  
We are traduc'd, by Demaratus, driv'n  
From Spartan confines, who hath meanly sought  
Barbarian courts for shelter. Hath he drawn  
Such virtues thence, that Sparta, who before 700  
Held him unworthy of his native sway,  
Should trust him now, and doubt auxiliar friends ?  
Injurious men ! We scorn the thoughts of flight.  
Let Asia bring her numbers ; unconstrain'd,  
We will confront them, and for Greece expire. 705

THUS

THUS in the garb of virtue he adorn'd  
Necessity. Laconia's king perceiv'd  
Through all its fair disguise the traitor's heart.  
So, when at first mankind in science rude  
Rever'd the moon, as bright in native beams, 710  
Some sage, who walk'd with nature through her  
works,  
By wisdom led, discern'd the various orb,  
Dark in itself, in foreign splendours clad.

LEONIDAS concludes. Ye Spartans, hear;  
Hear you, O Grecians, in our lot by choice 715  
Partakers, destin'd to enroll your names  
In time's eternal record, and enhance  
Your country's lustre : lo ! the noontide blaze  
Inflames the broad horizon. Each retire ;  
Each in his tent invoke the pow'r of sleep 720  
To brace his vigour, to enlarge his strength

For



For long endurance. When the sun descends,  
 Let each appear in arms. You, brave allies  
 Of Corinth, Phlius, and Mycenæ's tow'rs,  
 Arcadians, Locrians, must not yet depart.      725  
 While we repose, embattled wait. Retreat,  
 When we our tents abandon. I resign  
 To great Oileus' son supreme command.  
 Take my embraces, Æschylus. The fleet  
 Expects thee. To Themistocles report,      730  
 What thou hast seen and heard. O thrice farewell !  
 Th' Athenian answer'd. To yourselves, my friends,  
 Your virtues immortality secure,  
 Your bright examples victory to Greece.

RETAINING these injunctions, all dispers'd ; 735  
 While in his tent Leonidas remain'd  
 Apart with Agis, whom he thus bespake.  
 Yet in our fall the pond'rous hand of Greece

Shall

Shall Asia feel. This Persian's welcome tale  
Of us, inextricably doom'd her prey, 740  
As by the force of forcery will wrap  
Security around her, will suppress  
All sense, all thought of danger. Brother, know,  
That soon, as Cynthia from the vault of heav'n  
Withdraws her shining lamp, through Asia's host  
Shall massacre and desolation rage. 746  
Yet not to base associates will I trust  
My vast design. Their perfidy might warn  
The unsuspecting foe, our fairest fruits  
Of glory thus be wither'd. Ere we move, 750  
While on the solemn sacrifice intent,  
As Lacedæmon's ancient laws ordain,  
Our pray'rs we offer to the tuneful nine,  
Thou whisper through the willing ranks of Thebes  
Slow and in silence to disperse and fly. 755

Now

Now left by Agis, on his couch reclin'd,  
The Spartan king thus meditates alone.

My fate is now impending. O my soul,  
What more auspicious period couldst thou chuse  
For death, than now, when, beating high in joy,  
Thou tell'st me, I am happy? If to live, 761  
Or die, as virtue dictates, be to know  
The purest bliss; if she her charms displays  
Still lovely, still unfading, still serene  
To youth, to age, to death: whatever be 765  
Those other climes of happiness unchang'd,  
Which heav'n in dark futurity conceals,  
Still here, O virtue, thou art all our good.  
Oh! what a black, unspeakable reverse  
Must the unrighteous, must the tyrant prove? 770  
What in the struggle of departing day,  
When life's last glimpse, extinguishing, presents

Unknown



Unknown, inextricable gloom ? But how  
Can I explain the terrors of a breast,  
Where guilt resides ? Leonidas, forego 775  
The horrible conception, and again  
Within thy own felicity retire ;  
Bow grateful down to him, who form'd thy mind  
Of crimes unfruitful never to admit  
The black impress of a guilty thought. 780  
Else could I fearless by delib'rate choice  
Relinquish life ? This calm from minds deprav'd  
Is ever absent. Oft in them the force  
Of some prevailing passion for a time  
Suppresses fear. Precipitate they lose 785  
The sense of danger ; when dominion, wealth,  
Or purple pomp enchant the dazzled sight,  
Pursuing still the joys of life alone.

BUT he, who calmly seeks a certain death,

Book X.      L E O N I D A S.      161

When duty only, and the gen'ral good      790  
Dire&t his courage, must a soul possess,  
Which, all content deducing from itself,  
Can by unerring virtue's constant light  
Discern, when death is worthy of his choice.

THE man, thus great and happy, in the scope 795  
Of his large mind is stretch'd beyond his date.  
Ev'n on this shore of being he in thought,  
Supremely blest'd, anticipates the good,  
Which late posterity from him derives.

At length the hero's meditations close.      800  
The swelling transport of his heart subsides  
In soft oblivion ; and the filken plumes  
Of sleep envelop his extended limbs.

*The END of the Tenth Book.*

L E O N I.

# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the ELEVENTH.

### The Argument.

*Leonidas, rising before sun-set, dismisses the forces under the command of Medon; but observing a reluctance in him to depart, reminds him of his duty, and gives him an affectionate farewell. He then relates to his own select band a dream, which is interpreted by Megistias, arms himself, and marches in procession with his whole troop to an altar, newly raised on a neighbouring meadow; there offers a sacrifice to the muses: he invokes the assistance of those goddesses; he animates his companions; then, placing himself at their head, leads them against the enemy in the dead of the night.*

**T**H E day was closing. Agis left his tent.  
He fought his god-like brother. Him he  
found

Stretch'd



Stretch'd o'er his tranquil couch. His looks re-  
tain'd

The cheerful tincture of his waking thoughts  
To gladden sleep. So smile soft evening skies, 5  
Yet streak'd with ruddy light, when summer's suns  
Have veil'd their beaming foreheads. Transport  
fill'd

The eye of Agis. Friendship swell'd his heart.  
His yielding knee in veneration bent.

The hero's hand he kiss'd, then fervent thus. 10

O EXCELLENCE ineffable, receive

This secret homage ; and may gentle sleep  
Yet longer seal thine eyelids, that, unblam'd,

I may fall down before thee. He concludes

In adoration of his friend divine, 15

Whose brow the shades of slumber now forsake.

So, when the rising sun resumes his state,

Some

Some white-rob'd magus on Euphrates side,  
Or Indian seer on Ganges prostrate falls  
Before th' emerging glory, to salute 20  
That radiant emblem of th' immortal mind.

UPRISE both heroes. From their tents in arms  
Appear the bands elect. The other Greeks  
Are filing homeward. Only Medon stops.  
Melissa's dictates he forgets awhile. 25  
All inattentive to the warning voice  
Of Meliboeus, earnest he surveys  
Leonidas. Such constancy of zeal  
In good Oileus' offspring brings the fire  
To full remembrance in that solemn hour, 30  
And draws these cordial accents **from** the king.

APPROACH me, Locrian. In thy look I trace  
Consummate faith and love. But, vers'd in arms,  
Against

Against thy gen'ral's orders wouldst thou stay ?

Go, prove to kind Oïleus, that my heart 35

Of him was mindful, when the gates of death

I barr'd against his son. Yon gallant Greeks,

To thy commanding care from mine transfer'd,

Remove from certain slaughter. Last repair

To Lacedæmon. Thither lead thy fire. 40

Say to her senate, to her people tell,

Here didst thou leave their countrymen and king

On death resolv'd, obedient to the laws.

THE Locrian chief, restraining tears, replies.

My fire, left slumb'ring in the island-fane, 45

Awoke no more. Then joyful I shall meet

Him soon, the king made answer. Let thy worth

Supply thy father's. Virtue bids me die,

Thee live. Farewel. Now Medon's grief, o'er-

aw'd

By



By wisdom, leaves his long-suspended mind 50  
To firm decision. He departs, prepar'd  
For all the duties of a man, by deeds  
To prove himself the friend of Sparta's king,  
Melissa's brother, and Oileus' son.

THE gen'rous victims of the public weal, 55  
Assembled now, Leonidas salutes,  
His pregnant soul disburd'ning. O thrice hail !  
Surround me, Grecians ; to my words attend.  
This evening's sleep no sooner press'd my brows,  
Than o'er my head the empyreal form 60  
Of heav'n-enthron'd Alcides was display'd.  
I saw his magnitude divine. His voice  
I heard, his solemn mandate to arise.  
I rose. He bade me follow. I obey'd.  
A mountain's summit, clear'd from mist, or cloud,  
We reach'd in silence. Suddenly the howl 66  
Of

Of wolves and dogs, the vulture's piercing shriek,  
The yell of ev'ry beast and bird of prey  
Discordant grated on my ear. I turn'd.

A surface hideous, delug'd o'er with blood, 70

Beyond my view illimitably stretch'd,

One vast expanse of horror. There supine,

Of huge dimension, cov'ring half the plain,

A giant corse lay mangled, red with wounds,

Delv'd in th' enormous flesh, which, bubbling, fed

Ten thousand thousand grisly beaks and jaws, 76

Insatiably devouring. Mute I gaz'd;

When from behind I heard a second sound

Like surges, tumbling o'er a craggy shore.

Again I turn'd. An ocean there appear'd 80

With riven keels and shrouds, with shiver'd oars,

With arms and weltring carcasses bestrewn

Innumerable. The billows foam'd in blood.

But where the waters, unobserv'd before,

Between

Between two adverse shores, contracting, roll'd 85

A stormy current, on the beach forlorn

One of majestic stature I descry'd

In ornaments imperial. Oft he bent

On me his clouded eyeballs. Oft my name

He founded forth in execrations loud ; 90

'Then rent his splendid garments ; then his head

In rage divested of its graceful hairs.

Impatient now he ey'd a slender skiff,

Which, mounted high on boistrous waves, ap-  
proach'd.

With indignation, with reluctant grief 95

Once more his sight reverting, he embark'd

Amid the perils of the frowning deep.

O thou, by glorious actions rank'd in heav'n,

I here exclaim'd, instruct me. What produc'd

This desolation ? Hercules reply'd. 100

Let thy astonish'd eye again survey

The



The scene, thy soul abhorr'd. I look'd. I saw  
 A land, where plenty with disporting hands  
 Pour'd all the fruits of Amalthea's horn ;  
 Where bloom'd the olive; where the clustering vine  
 With her broad foliage mantled ev'ry hill ; 106  
 Where Ceres with exuberance enrob'd  
 The pregnant bosoms of the fields in gold ;  
 Where spacious towns, whose circuits proud contain'd  
 The dazzling works of wealth along the banks 110  
 Of copious rivers shew'd their stately tow'rs,  
 The strength and splendour of the peop'ed land.  
 Then in a moment clouds obscur'd my view ;  
 At once all vanish'd from my waking eyes.

THRICE I salute the omen, loud began 115  
 The sage Megistias. In this mystic dream  
 I see my country's victories. The land,

The deep shall own her triumphs ; while the  
tears

Of Asia and of Libya shall deplore

Their offspring, cast before the vulture's beak, 120

And ev'ry monstrous native of the main.

Those joyous fields of plenty picture Greece,

Enrich'd by conquest, and Barbarian spoils.

He, whom thou saw'st, in regal vesture clad,

Print on the sand his solitary step, 125

Is Xerxes, foil'd and fugitive. So spake

The rev'rend augur. Ev'ry bosom felt

Enthusiastic rapture, joy beyond

All sense, and all conception, but of those,

Who die to save their country. Here again 130

Th' exulting band Leonidas address'd.

SINCE happiness from virtue is deriv'd,

Who for his country dies, that moment proves

Most

Book XI.    L E O N I D A S.

171  
123

Most happy, as most virtuous.    Such our lot.

But go, Megistias.    Instantly prepare    135

The sacred fuel, and the victim due ;

That to the muses (so by Sparta's law

We are enjoin'd) our off'rings may be paid,

Before we march.    Remember, from the rites

Let ev'ry sound be absent ; not the fife,    140

Not ev'n the music-breathing flute be heard.

Meantime, ye leaders, ev'ry band instruct

To move in silence.    Mindful of their charge

The chiefs depart.    Leonidas provides

His various armour.    Agis close attends,    145

His best assistant.    First a breastplate arms

The spacious chest.    O'er this the hero spreads

The mailed cuirass, from his shoulders hung.

A shining belt infolds his mighty loyns.

Next on his stately temples he erects    150



The plumed helm ; then grasps his pond'rous  
shield :

Where nigh the center on projecting brass  
Th' inimitable artist had emboss'd  
The shape of great Alcides ; whom to gain  
Two goddesses contended. Pleasure here 155  
Won by soft wiles th' attracted eye ; and there  
The form of Virtue dignify'd the scene.  
In her majestic sweetness was display'd  
The mind sublime and happy. From her lips  
Seem'd eloquence to flow. In look serene, 160  
But fix'd intensely on the son of Jove,  
She wav'd her hand, where, winding to the skies,  
Her paths ascended. On the summit stood,  
Supported by a trophy near to heav'n,  
Fame, and protended her eternal trump. 165  
The youth attentive to her wisdom own'd  
The prevalence of Virtue ; while his eye,

Fill'd

Book XI.    L E O N I D A S.    173

Fill'd by that spirit, which redeem'd the world  
From tyranny and monsters, darted flames ;  
Not undescry'd by Pleasure, where she lay    170  
Beneath a gorgeous canopy.    Around  
Were flowrets strewn, and wantonly in rills  
A fount mæander'd.    All relax'd her limbs ;  
Nor wanting yet sollicitude to gain,  
What lost she fear'd, as struggling with despair, 175  
She seem'd collecting ev'ry pow'r to charm :  
Excess of sweet allurements she diffus'd  
In vain.    Still Virtue sway'd Alcides' mind.  
Hence all his labours.    Wrought with vary'd art,  
The shield's external surface they enrich'd.    180

THIS portraiture of glory on his arm  
Leonidas displays, and, tow'ring, strides  
From his pavilion.    Ready are the bands.  
The chiefs assume their station.    Torches blaze

Through ev'ry file. All now in silent pace 185

To join in solemn sacrifice proceed.

First Polydorus bears the hallow'd knife,

The sacred salt and barley. At his side

Diomedon sustains a weighty mace.

The priest, Megistias, follows like the rest 190

In polish'd armour. White, as winter's fleece,

A fillet round his shining helm reveals

The sacerdotal honors. By the horns,

Where laurels twine, with Alpheus Maron leads

The consecrated ox. And lo ! behind, 195

Leonidas advances. Never he

In such transcendent majesty was seen,

And his own virtue never so enjoy'd.

Successive move Dieneces the brave,

In hoary state Demophilus, the bloom 200

Of Dithyrambus, glowing in the hope

Of future praise, the gen'rous Agis next

Serene





All interspers'd with laurel. Purer deem'd,  
Than river, lake, or fountain, in a vase 220  
Old Ocean's briny element was plac'd  
Before the altar ; and of wine unmix'd  
Capacious goblets stood. Megistias now  
His helm unloosen'd. With his snowy head,  
Uncover'd, round the solemn pile he trod. 225  
He shook a branch of laurel, scatt'ring wide  
The sacred moisture of the main. His hand  
Next on the altar, on the victim strew'd  
The mingled salt and barley. Oe'r the horns  
Th' inverted chalice, foaming from the grape, 230  
Discharg'd a rich libation. Then approach'd  
Diomedon. Megistias gave the sign.  
Down sunk the victim by a deathful stroke,  
Nor groan'd. The augur bury'd in the throat  
His hallow'd steel. A purple current flow'd. 235  
Now smok'd the structure, now it flam'd abroad

In

In sudden splendour. Deep in circling ranks  
The Grecians press'd. Each held a sparkling  
brand ;

The beaming lances intermix'd ; the helms,  
The burnish'd armour multiply'd the blaze. 240  
Leonidas drew nigh. Before the pile  
His feet he planted. From his brows remov'd,  
The casque to Agis he consign'd, his shield,  
His spear to Dithyrambus ; then, his arms  
Extending, forth in supplication broke. 245

HARMONIOUS daughters of Olympian Jove,  
Who, on the top of Helicon ador'd,  
And high Parnassus, with delighted ears  
Bend to the warble of Castalia's stream,  
Or Aganippe's murmur, if from thence 250  
We must invoke your presence ; or along  
The neighb'ring mountains with propitious steps



If now you grace your consecrated bow'rs,  
Look down, ye Muses ; nor disdain to stand  
Each an immortal witness of our fate. 255

But with you bring fair Liberty, whom Jove,  
And you most honor. Let her sacred eyes  
Approve her dying Grecians ; let her voice  
In exultation tell the earth and heav'ns,  
These are her sons. Then strike your tuneful  
shells. 260

Record us guardians of our parent's age,  
Our matron's virtue, and our children's bloom,  
The glorious bulwarks of our country's laws,  
Who shall ennoble the historian's page,  
Shall on the joyous festival inspire 265  
With loftier strains the virgin's choral song.  
Then, O celestial maids, on yonder camp  
Let night sit heavy. Let a sleep like death  
Weigh down the eye of Asia. O infuse

A cool,

Book XI.      L E O N I D A S.      179

A cool, untroubled spirit in our breasts,      270  
Which may in silence guide our daring feet,  
Controll our fury, nor by tumult wild  
The friendly dark affright ; till dying groans  
Of slaughter'd tyrants into horror wake  
The midnight calm. Then turn destruction loose.  
Let terror, let confusion rage around,      276  
In one vast ruin heap the barb'rous ranks,  
Their horse, their chariots. Let the spurning steed  
Imbrue his hoofs in blood, the shatter'd cars  
Crush with their brazen weight the prostrate necks  
Of chiefs and kings, encircled, as they fall,      281  
By nations slain. You, countrymen and friends,  
My last commands retain. Your gen'ral's voice  
Once more salutes you, not to rouse the brave,  
Or minds, resolv'd and dauntless, to confirm.      285  
Too well by this expiring blaze I see  
Impatient valour flash from ev'ry eye.

O temper

O temper well that ardour, and your lips  
Close on the rising transport. Mark, how sleep  
Hath folded millions in his black embrace. 290  
No sound is wafted from th' unnumber'd foe.  
The winds themselves are silent. All conspires  
To this great sacrifice, where thousands soon  
Shall only wake to die. Their crowded train  
This night perhaps to Pluto's dreery shades 295  
Ev'n Xerxes' ghost may lead, unless reserv'd  
From this destruction to lament a doom  
Of more disgrace, when Greece confounds that  
pow'r,  
Which we will shake. But look, the setting moon  
Shuts on our darksome paths her waning horns. 300  
Let each his head distinguish by a wreath  
Of well-earn'd laurel. Then the victim share,  
Then crown the goblet. Take your last repast ;



With your forefathers, and the heroes old

You next will banquet in the blest'd abodes. 305

HERE ends their leader, Through th' encircling  
croud

The agitation of their spears denotes

High ardour. So the spiry growth of pines

Is rock'd, when Æolus in eddies winds

Among their stately trunks on Pelion's brow. 310

The Acarnanian seer distributes swift

The sacred laurel. Snatch'd in eager zeal,

Around each helm the woven leaves unite

Their glossy verdure to the floating plumes.

Then is the victim portion'd. In the bowl 315

\*Then flows the vine's empurpled stream. Aloof

The Theban train in wan dejection mute

Brood o'er their shame, or cast affrighted looks

On that determin'd courage, which, unmov'd

At fate's approach, with cheerful lips could taste 320  
The sparkling goblet, could in joy partake  
That last, that glorious banquet. Ev'n the heart  
Of Anaxander had forgot its wiles,  
Dissembling fear no longer. Agis here,  
Regardful ever of the king's command, 325  
Accosts the Theban chiefs in whispers thus.

LEONIDAS permits you to retire.  
While on the rites of sacrifice employ'd,  
None heed your motions. Separate and fly  
In silent pace. This heard, th' inglorious troop,  
Their files dissolving, from the rest withdraw. 331  
Unseen they moulder from the host like snow,  
Freed from the rigour of constraining frost ;  
Soon as the sun exerts his orient beam,  
The transitory landscape melts in rills 335  
Away, and structures, which delude the eye,

Insen-

Insensibly are lost. The solemn feast  
 Was now concluded. Now Laconia's king  
 Had reassum'd his arms. Before his step  
 The croud roll backward. In their gladden'd fight  
 His crest, illumin'd by uplifted brands,      341  
 Its purple splendour shakes. The tow'ring oak  
 Thus from a lofty promontory waves  
 His majesty of verdure. As with joy  
 The sailors mark his heav'n-ascending pride,      345  
 Which from afar directs their foamy course  
 Along the pathless ocean; so the Greeks  
 In transport gaze, as down their op'ning ranks  
 The king proceeds: from whose superior frame  
 A soul like thine, O Phidias, might conceive      350  
 In Parian marble, or effulgent brass  
 The form of great Apollo; when the god,  
 Won by the pray'rs of man's afflicted race,  
 In arms forsook his lucid throne to pierce

The



The monster Python in the Delphian vale. 355

Close by the hero Polydorus waits

To guide destruction through the Asian tents.

As the young eagle near his parent's side

In wanton flight essays his vig'rous wing,

Ere long with her to penetrate the clouds, 360

To dart impetuous on the fleecy train,

And dye his beak in gore ; by Sparta's king

The injur'd Polydorus thus prepares

His arm for death. He feasts his angry soul

On promis'd vengeance. His impatient thoughts

Ev'n now transport him furious to the seat 366

Of his long sorrows, not with fetter'd hands,

But now once more a Spartan with his spear,

His shield restor'd, to lead his country's bands,

And with them devastation. Nor the rest 370

Neglect to form. Thick-rang'd, the helmets blend

Their various plumes, as intermingling oaks

Combine

Combine their foliage in Dodona's grove ;  
Or as the cedars on the Syrian hills  
Their shady texture spread. Once more the king,  
O'er all the phalanx his confid'rate view 376  
Extending, through the ruddy gleam descries  
One face of gladness ; but the godlike van  
He most contemplates : Agis, Alpheus there,  
Megistias, Maron with Platæa's chief, 380  
Dieneces, Demophilus are seen  
With Thespia's youth : nor they their steady fight  
From his remove, in speechless transport bound  
By love, by veneration ; till they hear  
His last injunction. To their diff'rent posts 385  
They sep'rate. Instant on the dewy turf  
Are cast th' extinguish'd brands. On all around  
Drops sudden darkness, on the wood, the hill,  
The snowy ridge, the vale, the silver stream.  
It verg'd on midnight. Towr'd the hostile camp

In

In march compos'd and silent down the pass 391  
The phalanx mov'd. Each patient bosom hush'd  
Its struggling spirit, nor in whispers breath'd  
The rapt'rous ardour, virtue then inspir'd.  
So louring clouds along th' etherial void 395  
In slow expansion from the gloomy north  
Awhile suspend their horrors, destin'd soon  
To blaze in lightnings, and to burst in storms.

*The END of the Eleventh Book.*



LEONI.



# LEONIDAS.

## BOOK the TWELFTH.

### The Argument.

*Leonidas and the Grecians penetrate through the Persian camp to the very pavilion of Xerxes, who avoids destruction by flight. The Barbarians are slaughtered in great multitudes, and their camp is set on fire. Leonidas conducts his men in good order back to Thermopylæ, engages the Persians, who were descended from the hills, and after numberless proofs of superior strength and valour, sinks down covered with wounds, and expires the last of all the Grecian commanders.*

**A** CROSS th' unguarded bound of Asia's  
camp

Slow pass the Grecians: Through innum'rous  
tents,

Where

Where all his mute and tranquil, they pursue  
Their march sedate. Beneath the leaden hand  
Of sleep lie millions motionless and deaf, 5  
Nor dream of fate's approach. Their wary foes,  
By Polydorus guided, still proceed.  
Ev'n to the center of th' extensive host  
They pierce unseen; when lo! th' imperial tent  
Yet distant rose before them. Spreading round 10  
Th' august pavilion, was an ample space  
For thousands in arrangement. Here a band  
Of chosen Persians, watchful o'er the king,  
Held their nocturnal station. As the hearts  
Of anxious nations, whom th' unsparing sword, 15  
Or famine threaten, tremble at the sight  
Of fear-engender'd phantoms in the sky,  
Aerial hosts amid the clouds array'd,  
Portending woe and death; the Persian guard  
In equal consternation now descry'd 20

The

The glimpse of hostile armour. All disband,  
 As if auxiliar to his favor'd Greeks  
 Pan held their banner, scatt'ring from its folds  
 Fear and confusion, which to Xerxes couch,  
 Swift-winged, fly ; thence shake the gen'ral camp,  
 Whose numbers issue naked, pale, unarm'd, 26  
 Wild in amazement, blinded by dismay,  
 To ev'ry foe obnoxious. In the breasts  
 Of thousands, gor'd at once, the Grecian steel  
 Reeks in destruction. Deluges of blood 30  
 Float o'er the field, and foam around the heaps  
 Of wretches, slain unconscious of the hand,  
 Which wastes their helpless multitude. Amaze,  
 Affright, distraction from his pillow chace  
 The lord of Asia, who in thought beholds 35  
 United Greece in arms. Thy lust of pow'r !  
 Thy hope of glory ! whither are they flown  
 With all thy pomp ? In this disast'rous hour

What



What could avail th' immeasurable range  
Of thy proud camp, save only to conceal 40  
Thy trembling steps, O Xerxes, while thou fly'st?  
To thy deserted couch with other looks  
With other steps Leonidas is nigh.  
Before him terror strides. Gigantic death,  
And desolation at his side attend. 45

THE vast pavilion's empty space, where lamps  
Of gold shed light and odours, now admits  
The hero. Ardent throngs behind him press,  
But miss their victim. To the ground are hurl'd  
The glitt'ring ensigns of imperial state. 50  
The diadem, the scepter, late ador'd  
Through boundless kingdoms, underneath their  
feet  
In mingled rage and scorn the warriors crush  
A sacrifice to freedom. They return

Again

Book XII. L E O N I D A S. 191

Again to form. Leonidas exalts, 55

For new destruction his resistless spear ;

When double darkness suddenly descends:

The clouds, condensing, intercept the stars.

Black o'er the furrow'd main the raging east

In whirlwinds sweeps the surge. The coasts re-  
found. 60

The cavern'd rocks, the crashing forests roar.

Swift through the camp the hurricane impells

Its rude career ; when Asia's numbers, veil'd

Amid the shelt'ring horrors of the storm,

I vade the victor's lance. The Grecians halt ; 65

While to their gen'ral's pregnant mind occurs

A new attempt and vast. Perpetual fire

Beside the tent of Xerxes from the hour,

He lodg'd his standards on the Malian plains,

Had shone. Among his Magi to adore 70

Great Horomazes was the monarch wont

Before

Before the sacred light. Huge piles of wood  
 Lay nigh, prepar'd to feed the constant flame.  
 On living embers these are cast. So wills  
 Leonidas. The phalanx then divides. 75  
 Four troops are form'd, by Dithyrambus led,  
 By Alpheus, by Diomedon. The last  
 Himself conducts. The word is giv'n. They seize  
 The burning fuel. Sparkling in the wind,  
 Destructive fire is brandish'd. Ah, enjoin'd 80  
 To reassemble at the regal tent,  
 By various paths the hostile camp invade.

Now devastation, unconfin'd, involves  
 The Malian fields. Among Barbarian tents  
 From diff'rent stations fly consuming flames. 85  
 The Greeks afford no respite; and the storm  
 Exasperates the blaze. To ev'ry part  
 The conflagration like a sea expands,



One waving surface of unbounded fire.  
 In ruddy volumes mount the curling flames. 90  
 To heav'n's dark vault, and paint the midnight  
 clouds.

So, when the north emits his purpled lights,  
 The undulated radiance, streaming wide,  
 As with a burning canopy invests  
 Th' etherial concave. Oëta now disclos'd 95  
 His forehead, glitt'ring in eternal frost ;  
 While down his rocks the foamy torrents shone.  
 Far o'er the main the pointed rays were thrown ;  
 Night snatch'd her mantle from the ocean's breast ;  
 The billows glimmer'd from the distant shores. 100

BUT lo ! a pillar huge of smoke ascends,  
 Which overshades the field. There horror, there  
 Leonidas presides. Command he gave  
 To Polydorus, who, exulting, shew'd,

Where Asia's horse, and warlike cars possess'd 105  
A crouded station. At the hero's nod  
Devouring Vulcan riots on the stores  
Of Ceres, empty'd of the ripen'd grain,  
On all the tribute from her meadows brown,  
By rich Theffalia render'd to the scythe. 110  
A flood of fire envelopes all the ground.  
The cordage bursts around the blazing tents.  
Down sink the roofs on suffocated throngs,  
Close-wedg'd by fear. The Libyan chariot burns.  
Th' Arabian camel, and the Persian steed 115  
Bound through a burning deluge. Wild with pain  
They shake their singed manes. Their madding  
hoofs  
Dash through the blood of thousands, mix'd with  
flames,  
Which rage, augmented by the whirlwind's blast.

MEAN-

MEANTIME the scepter'd lord of half the globe  
From tent to tent precipitates his flight. 121

Dispers'd are all his satraps. Pride herself  
Shuns his dejected brow. Despair alone  
Waits on th' imperial fugitive, and shews,  
As round the camp his eye, distracted, roves, 125

No limits to destruction. Now is seen  
Aurora, mounting from her eastern hill  
In rosy sandals, and with dewy locks.

The winds subside before her; darkness flies;  
A stream of light proclaims the cheerful day, 130  
Which sees at Xerxes' tent the conqu'ring bands,  
All reunited. What could fortune more  
To aid the valiant, what to gorge revenge?

Lo! desolation o'er the adverse host  
Hath empty'd all her terrors. Ev'n the hand 135  
Of languid slaughter dropt the crimson steel;  
Nor nature longer can sustain the toil



Of unremitted conquest. Yet what pow'r  
Among these sons of Liberty reviv'd  
Their drooping warmth, new-strung their nerves,  
recall'd

140

Their weary'd swords to deeds of brighter fame?  
What, but th' inspiring hope of glorious death  
To crown their labours, and th' auspicious look  
Of their heroic chief, which, still unchang'd,  
Still in superior majesty declar'd,  
No toil had yet relax'd his matchless strength,  
Nor worn the vigour of his godlike soul.

145

BACK to the pass in gentle march he leads  
Th' embattled warriors. They behind the shrubs,  
Where Medon sent such numbers to the shades, 150  
In ambush lie. The tempest is o'erblown.  
Soft breezes only from the Malian wave  
O'er each grim face, besmear'd with smoke and gore,  
Their

Book XII.      L E O N I D A S.      197

Their cool refreshment breathe. The healing gale,  
A crystal rill near Oeta's verdant feet      155

Dispel the languor from their harrafs'd nerves,  
Fresh brac'd by strength returning. O'er their  
heads

Lo ! in full blaze of majesty appears

Melissa, bearing in her hand divine

Th' eternal guardian of illustrious deeds,      160

The sweet Phœbean lyre. Her graceful train

Of white-rob'd virgins, seated on a range

Half down the cliff, o'ershadowing the Greeks,

All with concordant strings, and accents clear

A torrent pour of melody, and swell

A high, triumphal, solemn dirge of praise,      165

Anticipating fame. Of endless joys

In blest'd Elysium was the song. Go, meet

Lycurgus, Solon and Zaleucus sage,

Let them salute the children of their laws.

Meet Homer, Orpheus and th' Aſcræan bard, 170

Who with a ſpirit, by ambroſial food

Refin'd, and more exalted, ſhall contend

Your ſplendid fate to warble through the bow'rs

Of amaranth and myrtle ever young

Like your renown. Your aſhes we will cull. 175

In yonder ſane depoſited, your urns

Dear to the Muſes ſhall our lays inſpire.

Whatever off'rings, genius, ſcience, art

Can dedicate to virtue, ſhall be yours,

The gifts of all the Muſes, to tranſmit 180

You on th' enliven'd canvafs, marble, braſs,

In wiſdom's volume, in the poet's ſong,

In ev'ry tongue, through ev'ry age and clime,

You of this earth the brighteſt flow'rs, not cropt,

Transplanted only to immortal bloom 185

Of praiſe with men, of happineſs with gods.



Book XII.      L E O N I D A S.      199

THE Grecian valour on religion's flame  
To ecstacy is wasted. Death is nigh,  
As by the Graces fashion'd, he appears  
A beauteous form. His adamantin gate      190  
Is half unfolded. All in transport catch  
A glimpse of immortality. Elate  
In rapturous delusion they believe,  
That to behold and solemnize their fate  
The goddesses are present on the hills      195  
With celebrating lyres. In thought serene  
Leonidas the kind deception bless'd,  
Nor undeceiv'd his soldiers. After all  
Th' incessant labours of the horrid night,  
Through blood, through flames continu'd, he pre-  
pares      200  
In order'd battle to confront the pow'rs  
Of Hyperanthes from the upper streights.

Not long the Greeks in expectation wait  
Impatient. Sudden with tumultuous shouts  
Like Nile's rude current, where in deafning roar  
Prone from the steep of Elephantis falls 206  
A sea of waters, Hyperanthes pours  
His chosen numbers on the Grecian camp  
Down from the hills precipitant. No foes  
He finds. The Thebans join him. In his van 210  
They march conductors. On, the Persians roll  
In martial thunder through the sounding pass.  
They issue forth impetuous from its mouth.  
That moment Sparta's leader gave the sign;  
When, as th' impulsive ram in forceful sway 215  
O'erturns a nodding rampart from its base,  
And strews a town with ruin, so the band  
Of ferry'd heroes down the Malian steep,  
Tremendous depth, the mix'd battalions swept  
Of Thebes and Persia. There no waters flow'd.

Abrupt

Book XII. LEONIDAS. 201

Abrupt and naked all was rock beneath. 221

Leonidas, incens'd, with grappling strength

Dash'd Anaxander on a pointed crag ;

Compos'd, then gave new orders. At the word

His phalanx, wheeling, penetrates the pass. 125

Astonish'd Persia stops in full career.

Ev'n Hyperanthes shrinks in wonder back.

Confusion drives fresh numbers from the shore.

The Malian ooze o'erwhelms them. Sparta's king

Still presses forward, till an open breadth 130

Of fifty paces yields his front extent

To proffer battle. Hyperanthes soon

Recalls his warriors, dissipates their fears.

Swift on the great Leonidas a cloud

Of darts is show'r'd. Th' encount'ring armies

close. 135

WHO first, sublimest hero, felt thy arm ?

K 5

What



What rivers heard along their echoing banks  
Thy name, in curses sounded from the lips  
Of noble mothers, wailing for their sons?  
What towns with empty monuments were fill'd 240  
For those, whom thy unconquerable sword  
This day to vultures cast? First Bessus died,  
A haughty satrap, whose tyrannic sway  
Despoil'd Hyrcania of her golden sheaves,  
And laid her forests waste. For him the bees 245  
Among the branches interwove their sweets;  
For him the fig was ripen'd, and the vine  
In rich profusion o'er the goblet foam'd.  
Then Dinis bled. On Hermus' side he reign'd;  
He long assiduous, unavailing woo'd 250  
The martial queen of Caria. She disdain'd  
A lover's soft complaint. Her rigid ear  
Was fram'd to watch the tempest, while it rag'd,  
Her eye accusom'd on the rolling deck

To

Book XII. LEONIDAS. 203

To brave the turgid billow. Near the shore 255

She now is present in her pinnace light.

The spectacle of glory crouds her breast

With diff'rent passions. Valiant, she applauds

The Grecian valour ; faithful, she laments

Her sad presage of Persia ; prompts her son 260

To emulation of the Greeks in arms,

And of herself in loyalty. By fate

Is she reserv'd to signalize that day

Of future shame, when Xerxes must behold

The blood of nations overflow his decks, 265

And to their bottom tinge the briny floods

Of Salamis ; whence she with Asia flies,

She only not inglorious. Low reclines

Her lover now, on Hermus to repeat

Her name no more, nor tell the vocal groves 270

His fruitless sorrows. Next Maduces fell,

A Paphlagonian. Born amid the sound

Of

Of chafing surges, and the roar of winds,  
He o'er th' inhospitable Euxin foam  
Was wont from high Carambis' rock to ken 175  
Ill-fated keels, which cut the Pontic stream,  
Then with his dire associates through the deep  
For spoil and slaughter guide his savage prow.  
Him dogs will rend ashore. From Medus far,  
Their native current, two bold brothers died, 180  
Sisamnes and Tithraustes, potent lords  
Of rich domains. On these Mithrines grey,  
Cilician prince, Lilæus, who had left  
The balmy fragrance of Arabia's fields  
With Babylonian Tenagon expir'd. 185

THE growing carnage Hyperanthes views  
Indignant, fierce in vengeful ardour strides  
Against the victor. Each his lance protends;  
But Asia's numbers interpose their shields,

Solicitous



Book XII. LEONIDAS. 205

Solicitous to guard a prince rever'd: 190

Or thither fortune whelm'd the tide of war,

His term protracting for augmented fame.

So two proud vessels, lab'ring on the foam,

Present for battle their destructive beaks;

When ridgy seas, by hurricanes uptorn, 195

In mountainous commotion dash between,

And either deck, in black'ning tempests veil'd,

Waft from its distant foe. More fiercely burn'd

Thy spirit, mighty Spartan. Such dismay

Relax'd thy foes, that each Barbarian heart 200

Resign'd all hopes of victory. The steeds

Of day were climbing their meridian height.

Continu'd shouts of onset from the pass

Resounded o'er the plain. Artuchus heard.

When first the spreading tumult had alarm'd 205

His distant quarter, starting from repose,

He down the valley of Spercheos rush'd

To

To aid his regal master. Asia's camp  
He found the seat of terror and despair. 309  
As in some fruitful clime, which late hath known  
The rage of winds and floods, although the storm  
Be heard no longer, and the deluge fled,  
Still o'er the wasted region nature mourns  
In melancholy silence; through the grove  
With prostrate glories lie the stately oak, 315  
Th' uprooted elm and beach; the plain is spread  
With fragments, swept from villages o'erthrown,  
Around the pastures flocks and herds are cast  
In dreery piles of death: so Persia's host  
In terror mute one boundless scene displays 320  
Of devastation. Half-devour'd by fire,  
Her tall pavilions, and her martial cars  
Deform the wide encampment. Here in gore  
Her princes welter, nameless thousands there,  
Not victims all to Greeks. In gasping heaps 325

Barbarians, mangled by Barbarians, shew'd  
The wild confusion of that direful night ;  
When, wanting signals, and a leader's care,  
They rush'd on mutual slaughter. Xerxes' tent  
On its exalted summit, when the dawn 330  
First streak'd the orient sky, was wont to bear  
The golden form of Mithra, clos'd between  
Two lucid crystals. This the gen'ral host  
Observ'd, their awful signal to arrange  
In arms compleat, and numberless to watch 335  
Their monarch's rising. This conspicuous blaze  
Artuchus places in th' accustom'd seat.  
As, after winds have ruffled by a storm  
The plumes of darkness, when her welcome face  
The morning lifts serene, each wary swain 340  
Collects his flock dispers'd ; the neighing steed,  
The herds forsake their shelter : all return  
To well-known pastures, and frequented streams :



So now this cheering signal on the tent  
 Revives each leader. From inglorious flight 245  
 Their scatter'd bands they call, their wonted ground  
 Resume, and hail Artuchus. From their swarms  
 A force he culls. Thermopylæ he seeks.  
 Fell shouts in horrid dissonance precede.

His phalanx swift Leonidas commands 250  
 To circle backward from the Malian bay.  
 Their order changes. Now, half-orb'd, they stand  
 By Oeta's fence protected from behind,  
 With either flank united to the rock.  
 As by th' excelling architect dispos'd 255  
 To shield some haven, a stupendous mole,  
 Fram'd of the grove and quarry's mingled strength,  
 In ocean's bosom penetrates afar:  
 There, pride of art, immoveable it looks  
 On Eolus and Neptune; there defies 290

Those potent gods combin'd : unyielding thus,  
 The Grecians stood a solid mass of war  
 Against Artuchus, join'd with numbers new  
 To Hyperanthes. In the foremost rank  
 Leonidas his dreadful station held.      295

Around him soon a spacious void was seen  
 By flight, or slaughter in the Persian van.  
 In gen'rous shame and wrath Artuchus burns,  
 Discharging full at Lacedæmon's chief  
 An iron-studded mace. It glanc'd aside,      300  
 Turn'd by the massy buckler. Prone to earth  
 The satrap fell. Alcander aim'd his point,  
 Which had transfix'd him prostrate on the rock,  
 But for th' immediate succour, he obtain'd  
 From faithful soldiers, lifting on their shields      305  
 A chief belov'd. Not such Alcander's lot.  
 An arrow wounds his heart. Supine he lies,  
 The only Theban, who to Greece preserv'd

Unviolated

Unviolated faith. Physician sage,  
On pure Cithæron healing herbs to cull 380  
Was he accustom'd, to expatiate o'er  
The Heliconian pastures, where no plants  
Of poison spring, of juice salubrious all,  
Which vipers, winding in their verdant track,  
Drink and expel the venom from their tooth, 385  
Dipt in the sweetness of that soil divine.  
On him the brave Artontes sinks in death,  
Renown'd through wide Bithynia, ne'er again  
The clam'rous rites of Cybelé to share ;  
While echo murmurs through the hollow caves 390  
Of Berecynthian Dindymus. The strength  
Of Alpheus sent him to the shades of night.  
Ere from the dead was disengag'd the spear,  
Huge Abradates, glorying in his might,  
Surpassing all of Cissian race, advanc'd 395  
To grapple ; planting firm his foremost step,

The



The victor's throat he grasp'd. At Nemea's games

The wrestler's chaplet Alpheus had obtain'd.

He summons all his art. Oblique the stroke

Of his swift foot supplants the Persian's heel. 400

He, falling, clings by Alpheus' neck, and drags

His foe upon him. In the Spartan's back

Enrag'd Barbarians fix their thronging spears.

To Abradates' chest the weapons pass ;

They rivet both in death. This Maron sees, 405

This Polydorus, frowning. Victims, strewn

Before their vengeance, hide their brother's corse.

At length the gen'rous blood of Maron warms

The sword of Hyperanthes. On the spear

Of Polydorus falls the pond'rous ax 410

Of Sacian Mardus. From the yielding wood

The steely point is sever'd. Undismay'd,

The Spartan stoops to rear the knotted mace,

Left by Artuchus ; but thy fatal blade,

Abrocomes,

Abrocomes, that dreadful instant watch'd 345  
To rend his op'ning side. Unconquer'd still,  
Swift he discharges on the Sacian's front  
A pond'rous blow, which burst the scatter'd brain.  
Down his own limbs meantime a torrent flows  
Of vital crimson. Smiling, he reflects  
On sorrow finish'd, on his Spartan name, 350  
Renew'd in lustre. Sudden to his side  
Springs Dithyrambus. Through th' uplifted arm  
Of Mindus, pointing a malignant dart  
Against the dying Spartan, he impell'd  
His spear. The point with violence unspent, 355  
Urg'd by such vigour, reach'd the Persian's throat  
Above his corselet. Polydorus stretch'd  
His languid hand to Thespia's friendly youth,  
Then bow'd his head in everlasting peace.  
While Mindus, wasted by his streaming wound, 360  
Beside him faints and dies. In flow'ring prime

He

He, lord of Colchis, from a bride was torn

His tyrant's hasty mandate to obey.

She tow'rd the Euxin sends her plaintive sighs ;

She woos in tender piety the winds : 365

Vain is their favor ; they can never breathe

On his returning fail. At once a croud

Of eager Persians seize the victor's spear.

One of his nervous hands retains it fast.

The other bares his falchion. Wounds and death

He scatters round. Sofarmes feels his arm 371

Lopt from the shoulder. Zatis leaves entwin'd

His fingers round the long-disputed lance.

On Mardon's reins descends the pond'rous blade,

Which half divides his body. Pheron strides 375

Across the pointed ash. His weight o'ercomes

The weary'd Thespian, who resigns his hold ;

But cleaves th' elate Barbarian to the brain.

Abrocomes darts forward, shakes his steel,

Whose



Whose lightning threatens death. The wary  
Greek 450

Wards with his sword the well-directed stroke,  
Then, closing, throws the Persian. Now what aid  
Of mortal force, or interposing heav'n  
Preserves the eastern hero? Lo! the friend  
Of Teribazus. Eager to avenge 455

That lov'd, that lost companion, and defend  
A brother's life, beneath the sinewy arm,  
Outstretch'd, the sword of Hyperanthes pass'd  
Through Dithyrambus. All the strings of life  
At once relax; nor fame, nor Greece demand 460  
More from his valour. Prostrate now he lies  
In glories, ripen'd on his blooming head.  
Him shall the Thespian maidens in their songs  
Record once loveliest of the youthful train,  
The gentle, wise, beneficent and brave, 465  
Grace of his lineage, and his country's boast,

Now

Now fall'n, Elysium to his parting soul  
Uncloses. So the cedar, which supreme  
Among the groves of Libanus hath tow'rd,  
Uprooted, low'rs his graceful top, preferr'd 470  
For dignity of growth some royal dome,  
Or heav'n-devoted fabric to adorn.  
Diomedon bursts forward. Round his friend  
He heaps destruction. Troops of wailing ghosts  
Attend thy shade, fall'n hero! Long prevail'd 475  
His furious arm in vengeance uncontroll'd;  
Till four Assyrians on his shelving spear,  
Ere from a Cissian's prostrate body freed,  
Their pond'rous maces all discharge. It broke.  
Still with a shatter'd truncheon he maintains 480  
Unequal fight. Impetuous through his eye  
The well-aim'd fragment penetrates the brain  
Of one bold warrior; there the splinter'd wood,  
Infix'd, remains. The hero last unsheaths

His

His falchion broad. A second ðees aghaft 415  
His entrails open'd. Sever'd from a third,  
The head, steel-cas'd, descends. In blood is roll'd  
The grizly beard. That effort breaks the blade  
Short from its hilt. The Grecian stands disarm'd.  
The fourth, Astaspes, proud Chaldæan lord, 420  
Is nigh. He lifts his iron-plated mace.  
This, while a cluster of auxiliar friends  
Hang on the Grecian shield, to earth depress'd,  
Loads with unerring blows the batter'd helm;  
Till on the ground Diomedon extends 425  
His mighty limbs. So, weaken'd by the force  
Of some tremendous engine, which the hand  
Of Mars impells, a citadel, high-tow'rd,  
Whence darts and fire and ruins long have aw'd  
Begirding legions, yields at last, and spreads 430  
Its disuniting ramparts on the ground;  
Joy fills th' assailants, and the battle's tide

Whelms



Whelms o'er the widening breach : the Persian  
thus

O'er the late-fear'd Diomedon advanc'd  
Against the Grecian remnant : when behold 505  
Leonidas. At once their ardour froze.  
He had awhile behind his friends retir'd,  
Oppress'd by labour. Pointless was his spear,  
His buckler cleft. As, overworn by storms,  
A vessel steers to some protecting bay ; 510  
Then, soon as timely gales, inviting, curl  
The azure floods, to Neptune shews again  
Her masts apparell'd fresh in shrouds and sails,  
Which court the vig'rous wind : so Sparta's king,  
In strength repair'd, a spear and buckler new 515  
Presents to Asia. From her bleeding ranks  
Hydarnes, urg'd by destiny, approach'd.  
He, proudly vaunting, left an infant race,  
A spouse lamenting on the distant verge

Of Bactrian Ochus. Victory in vain 520

He, parting, promis'd. Wanton hope will sport

Round his cold heart no longer. Grecian spoils,

Imagin'd triumphs, pictur'd on his mind,

Fate will erase forever. Through the targe,

The thick-mail'd corselet his divided chest 525

Of bony strength admits the hostile spear.

Leonidas draws back the steely point,

Bent and enfeebled by the forceful blow.

Meantime within his buckler's rim, unseen,

Amphistreus stealing, in th' ungarded flank 530

His dagger struck. In slow effusion ooz'd

The blood, from Hercules deriv'd ; but death

Not yet had reach'd his mark. Th' indignant king

Gripes irresistibly the Persian's throat.

He drags him prostrate. False, corrupt and base,

Fallacious, fell, preeminent was he 536

Among tyrannic satraps. Phrygia pin'd

Beneath th' oppression of his ruthless sway.  
Her soil had once been fruitful. Once her towns  
Were populous and rich. The direful change 540  
To naked fields and crumbling roofs declar'd,  
Th' accurs'd Amphistreuſ govern'd. As the ſpear  
Of Tyrian Cadmuſ rivett'd to earth  
The poiſ'nouſ dragon, whoſe infectious breath  
Had blaſted all Bœotia ; ſo the king, 545  
On prone Amphistreuſ trampling, to the rock  
Nails down the tyrant, and the fractur'd ſtaff  
Leaves in his panting body. But the blood,  
Great hero, dropping from thy wound, revives  
The hopes of Perſia. Thy unyielding arm 550  
Upholds the conflict ſtill. Againſt thy ſhield  
The various weapons ſhiver, and thy feet  
With glitt'ring points ſurround. The Lydian ſword,  
The Perſian dagger leave their ſhatter'd hilts ;  
Bent is the Caſpian ſcymetar : the lance, 555



The javelin, dart and arrow all combine  
Their fruitless efforts. From Alcides sprung,  
Thou standst unshaken like a Thracian hill,  
Like Rhodope, or Hæmus; where in vain  
The thund'rer plants his livid bolt; in vain 560  
Keen-pointed lightnings pierce th' encrusted snow;  
And winter, beating with eternal war,  
Shakes from his dreery wings discordant storms,  
Chill fleet, and clatt'ring hail. Advancing bold,  
His rapid lance Abrocomes in vain 565  
Aims at the forehead of Laconia's chief.  
He, not unguarded, rears his active blade  
Athwart the dang'rous blow, whose fury wastes  
Above his crest in air. Then, swiftly wheel'd,  
The pond'rous weapon cleaves the Persian's knee 570  
Sheer through the parted bone. He sidelong falls.  
Crush'd on the ground beneath contending feet,  
Great Xerxes' brother yields the last remains

Of tortur'd life. Leonidas persists ;

Till Agis calls Dieneces, alarms 575

Demophilus, Megistias : they o'er piles

Of Allarodian and Sasperian dead

Haste to their leader : they before him raise

The brazen bulwark of their massy shields.

The foremost rank of Asia stands and bleeds ; 580

The rest recoil : but Hyperanthes swift

From band to band his various host pervades,

Their drooping hopes rekindles, in the brave

New fortitude excites : the frigid heart

Of fear he warms. Aftaspes first obeys, 585

Vain of his birth, from ancient Belus drawn,

Proud of his wealthy stores, his stately domes,

More proud in recent victory : his might

Had foil'd Plataea's chief. Before the front

He strides impetuous. His triumphant mace 590

Against the brave Dieneces he bends.

The

The weighty blow bears down th' opposing shield,  
And breaks the Spartan's shoulder. Idle hangs  
The weak defence, and loads th' inactive arm,  
Depriv'd of ev'ry function. Agis bares 595  
His vengeful blade. At two well levell'd strokes  
Of both his hands, high brandishing the mace,  
He mutilates the foe. A Sacian chief  
Springs on the victor. Jaxartes' banks  
To this brave savage gave his name and birth. 600  
His look erect, his bold deportment spoke  
A gallant spirit, but untam'd by laws,  
With dreery wilds familiar, and a race  
Of rude Barbarians, horrid, as their clime.  
From its direction glanc'd the Spartan spear, 605  
Which, upward borne, o'erturn'd his iron cone.  
Black o'er his forehead fall the naked locks ;  
They aggravate his fury : while his foe  
Repeats the stroke, and penetrates his chest.

Th'



Th' intrepid Sacian through his breast and back 610  
Receives the griding steel. Along the staff  
He writhes his tortur'd body ; in his grasp  
A barbed arrow from his quiver shakes ;  
Deep in the streaming throat of Agis hides  
The deadly point ; then grimly smiles and dies. 615

FROM him fate hastens to a nobler prey,  
Dieneces. His undefended frame  
The shield abandons, sliding from his arm.  
His breast is gor'd by javelins. On the foe  
He hurls them back, extracted from his wounds. 620  
Life, yielding slow to destiny, at length  
Forfakes his riven heart ; nor less in death  
Thermopylæ he graces, than before  
By martial deeds and conduct. What can stem  
The barb'rous torrent ? Agis bleeds. His spear 625  
Lies useless, irrecoverably plung'd

In Jaxartes' body. Low reclines

Dieneces. Leonidas himself,

O'erlabour'd, wounded, with his dinted sword

The rage of war can exercise no more. 630

One last, one glorious effort age performs.

Demophilus, Megistias join their might.

They check the tide of conquest ; while the spear

Of slain Dieneces to Sparta's chief

The fainting Agis bears. The pointed ash, 635

In that dire hand for battle rear'd anew,

Blasts ev'ry Persian's valour. Back in heaps

They roll, confounded, by their gen'ral's voice

In vain exhorted longer to endure

The ceaseless waste of that unconquer'd arm. 640

So, when the giants from Olympus chac'd

Th' inferior gods, themselves in terror shun'd

Th' incessant streams of lightning, where the hand

Of heav'n's great father with eternal might

Sustain'd

Sustain'd the dreadful conflict. O'er the field 645

Awhile Bellona gives the battle rest ;

When Thespia's leader and Megistias drop

At either side of Lacedæmon's king.

Beneath the weight of years and labour bend

The hoary warriors. Not a groan molests 650

Their parting spirits ; but in death's calm night

All-silent sinks each venerable head :

Like aged oaks, whose deep-descending roots

Had pierc'd resistless through a craggy slope ;

There during three long centuries have brav'd 655

Malignant Eurus, and the boist'rous north ;

Till bare and sapless by corroding time

Without a blast their mossy trunks recline

Before their parent hill. Not one remains,

But Agis, near Leonidas, whose hand 660

The last kind office to his friend performs,

Extracts the Sacian's arrow. Life, releas'd,

Pours



Pours forth in crimson floods. O Agis, pale  
Thy placid features, rigid are thy limbs ;  
They lose their graces. Dimm'd, thy eyes reveal  
The native goodness of thy heart no more. 666  
Yet other graces spring. The noble corse  
Leonidas surveys. A pause he finds  
To mark, how lovely are the patriot's wounds,  
And see those honors on the breast, he lov'd. 670

BUT Hyperanthes from the trembling ranks  
Of Asia tow'rs, inflexibly resolv'd  
The Persian glory to redeem, or fall.  
The Spartan, worn by toil, his languid arm  
Uplifts once more. He waits the dauntless prince.  
The heroes now stand adverse. Each awhile 675  
Restrains his valour. Each, admiring, views  
His godlike foe. At length their brandish'd points  
Provoke the contest, fated soon to close

The

Book XII.    L E O N I D A S.    227-

The long-continu'd horrors of the day.    680

Fix'd in amaze and fear, the Asian throng,

Unmov'd and silent, on their bucklers pause.

Thus on the wastes of India, while the earth

Beneath him groans, the elephant is seen,

His huge proboscis writhing, to defy    685

The strong rhinoceros, whose pond'rous horn

Is newly whetted on a rock. Anon

Each hideous bulk encounters. Earth her groan

Redoubles. Trembling, from their covert gaze

The savage inmates of surrounding woods    690

In distant terror. By the vary'd art

Of either chief the dubious combat long

Its great event retarded. Now his lance

Far through the hostile shield Laconia's king

Impell'd. Aside the Persian swung his arm.    695

Beneath it pass'd the weapon, which his targe

Encumber'd. Hopes of conquest and renown

Elate

Elate his courage. Sudden he directs  
His rapid javelin to the Spartan's throat.  
But he his wary buckler upward rais'd, 700  
Which o'er his shoulder turn'd the glancing steel;  
For one last effort then his scatter'd strength  
Collecting, levell'd with resistless force  
The massive orb, and dash'd its brazen verge  
Full on the Persian's forehead. Down he sunk, 705  
Without a groan expiring, as o'erwhelm'd  
Beneath a marble fragment, from its seat  
Heav'd by a whirlwind, sweeping o'er the ridge  
Of some aspiring mansion. Gen'rous prince!  
What could his valour more? His single might 710  
He match'd with great Leonidas, and fell  
Before his native bands. The Spartan king  
Now stands alone. In heaps his slaughter'd friends,  
All stretch'd around him, lie. The distant foes  
Show'r on his head innumerable darts. 715

From



Book XII.      L E O N I D A S.      229

From various fluices gush the vital floods ;  
They stain his fainting limbs. Nor yet with pain  
His brow is clouded ; but those beauteous wounds,  
The sacred pledges of his own renown,  
And Sparta's safety, in serenest joy      720  
His closing eye contemplates. Fame can twine  
No brighter laurels round his glorious head ;  
His virtue more to labour fate forbids,  
And lays him now in honorable rest  
To seal his country's liberty by death.      725

*The END of the Twelfth and last Book.*



# ERRATA

Page 14. line 222 for . *put* ,

141. line 464 *relinguishing* *read* *relinquishing*

465 *Perfian* *read* *Perfians*



А Т А И И Э

1942-1943

1940-1941

2014-11-10